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OR,

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A

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"A Wretch! a Villain! lost to love and truth!
"That can, with studied, sly, ensnaring art,
"Betray sweet Jenny's unsuspecting youth?
"Curse on his perjur'd arts!"

ROBERT BURNS.

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WHO CAN HE BE,

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CHAPTER I.

BARCLAY, finding his persuasions had no weight with Seamore, urged Alfred to comply with his wishes; rather chusing to be called changeable, than acknowledge the decline of his power.

Seamore was not to be warped from his purpose; he had determined on the departure of Alfred, and nothing

could alter his resolution. With the utmost impatience he awaited the return of O'Hara. It was not long before the Captain made his re-appearance. Mirth, conviviality, and good cheer invited him; and O'Hara was no unsocial being. He had not learned the lesson of self-denial. Ever grateful for the smallest good, it made on him an impression indelible; insomuch that it was seldom forgotten, and begat the wish of renewal.

Seamore hailed him with the rapture of one, who beholds the harbinger of good, or with the joy of the lover on beholding his mistress. Like him, Seamore considered his doubts and fears at an end. He saw a smile; joy animated his own speaking countenance; for he had forgot that the Captain never uttered a sentence, whe-

ther to impart good or bad news, unaccompanied with a smile. My dear friend, said he, I am sorry I must disappoint you, but 'tis no fault of mine. Recollect, at the very time I told you, it all depended on my friend. Now the whole of the matter is, I had a better opinion of his word than he had regard for it himself. When once a man forfeits his word with me, I consider him what no person should call O'Hara for the world. But we are not all alike; I believe you'll allow that. I should have spoke my mind pretty freely. Ah! had it been in his power to make me Lord High Admiral. But where another is concerned, we ought to overlook mere punctilio. Seeing I was not in my usual good humour, his secretary attempted to soothe me; but, by my honor, he might as

well whispered peace to the troubled ocean. I re-perused the letter, exclaiming aloud, "I hate empty professions. Language is deceitful when it corresponds not with the actions."

Neither the indignation of the Captain, nor the effect it produced, was attended to by Seamore. All that interested him was, the return of the absentee, which, O'Hara informed him, would not exceed a week.

Like the lenient balm, this allayed, if it did not heal, the wound. The period is but short, thought Seamore, composing his ruffled features into something resembling pleasantry. This favorable omen revived the hopes of O'Hara. Things were in a fair train; he had soothed Seamore, 'twas now his turn to be soothed. Blushing for his negligent friend, he uttered all that

language could dictate. The time, to be sure, is not so very distant; but I had sooner been the loser of thousands, than such a circumstance should have happened. It mortifies me more, ah! more than millions. Immense sum! yet hardly sufficient to express what the incensed Captain felt.

Seamore entreated he would think no more about the subject; concluding with a well-timed compliment to that high sense of honor, which induced him to augment the offence. But O'Hara was not so ready to pardon, as he was to excuse. Come, come, said the consoler, let us convert vexation into hilarity; and you, Captain, agree to spend the appointed time with me.

As one, who sees the accomplishment of all his schemes, hardly knows

how to express his joy, and utters incoherency, so did the Captain. No, he thanked him; he was engaged, yet would postpone all other business for the superior pleasure of his society. Then excused himself, then hesitated, but the ultimatum was acceptance, and the horse of O'Hara fed amicably with those of Seamore. Now of this little animal the Captain was prodigiously fond; not so much for his value, (of that I must say nothing), but because he was partial to him; and it might have been so, there is no accounting for fancy.

It frequently happens, when we feel respect for a person not every way our equal, we wish to make them a present, yet in the most delicate manner. Seamore, feeling this generous inclination, pretended to discover beauties in

Rosinante, that, perhaps, never existed. O'Hara extolled his good qualities, no doubt, exaggerated from partiality. How much was he pleased to hear the same approbation bestowed by Seamore, who, selecting one of the most valuable of his horses, begged the Captain to oblige him by an exchange. O'Hara hesitated; for the superiority of the horse had, of course, no weight with him, but he could not refuse; and had the advantage been in favour of Seamore, he would have done the same.

This little friendly contest over, a light repast was partook of by O'Hara. The sound of his voice was the only intimation Alfred received of his arrival, and most unwelcome he considered it. But when he heard, that he had yet a week, hope revived; another

impediment might arise. Helen encouraged the idea, and was less reserved toward the Captain. This change, so devoutly wished, pleased O'Hara. He was unusually insinuating, and called to his aid the art of pleasing.

An elegant barouche and four, attended by two outriders, engaged their attention. A Lady, in high costume, was seated on the barouche-box by the gentleman, who performed as coachman. He was dressed in a straw hat, blue striped trowsers, a brown fustian coat, and a scarlet handkerchief striped with blue, slung round his neck.—Smacking his whip, with the utmost agility he reached the ground. Extending his finger to Seamore, who, expecting the honor, was in immediate readiness. Next alighted his fair companion, the sprightly Miss Mandeville,

with inimitable gaiety deriding the fears of Ladies Alsop and Browning; the former protesting a seat so elevated had terrified her to death, and the latter echoing the same delicate terror, to the great merriment of Miss Mandeville and the rest of the company.

The facetious Captain, remarking the dress of Lord Stanley, said, it put him in mind of a story he had heard. He was entreated to relate it. Bowing he began, though with a preface that he could not vouch for its authenticity. —Down dashed through Bond Street, a dark green barouche, with brass mouldings and morocco reclining cushions. A lady was seated on the dickey; her figure, which seemed elegant, was almost concealed by a large wrapping bannian, of salmon colour, Chinese silk. On her head she wore

a small jockey bonnet, of variegated willow. The gentleman coachman wore clothes similar to yours, (and the Captain bowed to Lord Stanley). The vehicle stopped at a jeweller's shop. The obsequious man of business, with a profusion of bows, greeted his customer. To the lady he was unusually attentive, her air being so remarkably elegant, (for these gentry derive peculiar satisfaction in serving dashing customers). Now glittered costly gems, and instantly was brought forth all the treasures of his shop. Did the lady approve of this? or would she rather prefer that?—Thus tempted, as a man placed between two beauties, sighs for the possession of both, so did she. With infinite persuasion, the jeweller prevailed on the gentleman to let the lady have what she wished. Uncon-

scionable creature! said he, in a half whisper, you know I have no money. At this the tradesman simpered, exclaiming, Oh! Sir; with an expression that could not be misunderstood. Then you think I am only jesting? returned the gentleman; but unless you will trust me, I cannot take the articles. Why, Sir, as to the matter of that, if you really wish for credit, I'm sure you are welcome; but I know you only chuse to be pleasant, and are not in earnest. If that is your opinion, replied the other, 'tis impossible for me to persuade you to the contrary. A sceptical smile again graced the jeweller's features, and with alacrity he prepared to put up the articles. But do you not know where I live, or who I am? I live with Lord Aimsworth, in Grosvenor Square, and am his coach-

man. And the lady your companion, said the witty tradesman, is housemaid, I suppose. A glow of indignation tinged the blooming cheek of the lady, which she sought to suppress, and the more completely convinced the shopkeeper his conjecture was right. Possessed of more self-command, the gentleman appeared to take no notice of his remark; and with the jewels in his possession, mounted the barouche-box. The rattling of the wheels denoted his departure; and the jeweller, winking significantly to the shopman, who had heard the whole dialogue, said, He thinks himself a knowing one, but I showed him I was no flat, was down upon him; so pretended to know who he was; you may depend upon it, he is no other than Lord Aimsworth himself. Did you

see, remarked the shopman, how the lady reddened at what you said?—Yes, yes, returned his sagacious master, nothing was lost upon me. I intend following them, when I think they are at a proper distance.

He did so, and with self-gratulation, heard a loud knock at the door of Lord Aimsworth. This was sufficient; home he returned, to admire his Lordship's pleasantry, and the Lady's confusion. I thought all the while he was some Lord, said he, approving his own penetration. And in this opinion his neighbours joined, as did all those whom the unknown honored with a visit. Never was credit so readily granted; and the sequel proved, never was payment so long deferred. "Who's the Dupe," found performers in every shopkeeper. 'Tis true, the characters

were not supported with much spirit, though every one felt what they acted. Lo! all Bond Street was in an uproar. What had happened ? Enough, I think, retorted a tailor, to sit and work for nothing ; and for whom ? a coachman, a coachman ? Yes, a coachman. Why, is the name so uncommon ? is it so unfamiliar to your ears ? said a justly incensed and highly injured linen-draper ; one would think the name of coachman was the name of some amphibious or antideluvian being. Instead of what every gentleman wishes to be thought, that cheat, that impostor, who has taken us all in, is really what he represented himself to be ; and yet you call him a cheat, said the bystanders ; could he help your conceit ? if you created him a Lord, is he to blame ?

Rail at that partial mother, nature, who, neglecting some of her children, endues the others with irresistible attraction. Dress aids her design; and you, as willing victims, must lament your own want of discrimination. The respect that is paid to clothes enhances their value; and while the indigent man, limited to time, in vain asks to be served, you leave him to attend the dashing beau.

This was adding insult to injury, said O'Hara. Reproved, but not reformed, the dupes retired, vowing vengeance against the ingenious coachman, who, with his gay companion, had decamped from the service of Lord Aimsworth.

This story was highly relished by the Captain's attentive auditors, and

had deferred their intended ride to the forest. Again Miss Mandeville ascended her elevated seat, and Lord Stanley resumed the whip.

CHAPTER II.

On the return of Helen, she received the sad intelligence that Miss Granger, three days after her arrival at Brighton, had breathed her last. To the memory of that amiable girl, she consecrated the tear of sacred sorrow; her early and untimely fate awakened the tenderest emotions, and called forth her sympathy. Alfred entered into her feelings, and all her sorrow shared. They were soon to experience a pang the most severe—that of separation! Seamore, unmoved,

withstood the entreaties of Alfred, he therefore had no alternative; without friends, or fortune, could he aspire to the hand of Helen? and should she bestow it, for well he knew her disinterested nature, ought he to take advantage of her affection; gain her love, to make her miserable? he shuddered at the thought. In the navy I may meet with promotion, and in time become elevated to that rank, which, most adorned, if graced by Helen. Inspired with enthusiasm, he, by every persuasive argument, sought to reconcile her to his departure, setting at nought each danger, and tenderly soothing her fears.

The fate of Percy, with every aggravation, presented itself; might not Alfred also fall a victim! sighs unbidden heaved her bosom. Subdued the

lover gazed, nor pled, nor spoke, for the power was denied him.

With the gloomy presentiment that melancholy inspires, Helen already viewed anticipated evil, as if really a certain event; the mental eye witnessed the struggle of hopeless love; saw the overwhelmed victim sink beneath the ruthless waves, and, like another Percy, find a grave for all his cares. That luckless and ill-fated youth, fired by ambition, had sought advancement, but met his fate, fame to pursue; vain hope. Death hovered round his steps; a fatal wreck deprived of life his destined prey; oh stay, dear Alfred, nor tempt the dangers of the deep! ah! leave me not to mourn like poor Cecilia! will you more valuable be, should fortune crown your hopes with success? but tell me frankly, too haughty

Alfred, you cannot brook the inequality, cannot receive a favor from Helen Seamore! Go, then, seek honor, fame, wealth, and all you wish, nor hide the pangs I shall endure, and when you return Helen shall repeat her love; you'll listen then, the difference may not be so vast. She ceased, and had prevailed, could eloquence, could love, or aught beside, stifle honor, gratitude, and every exalted sentiment, which bids the generous mind to nobly contend with danger, rather than meanly shrink at its approach. The mournful pathos of her voice penetrated his very soul, and sunk into its inmost recesses; at length, said he, in a voice scarcely audible, Helen, you wrong me: the pride you speak of is mean and despicable, unworthy him who dares aspire to your love, but I

cannot resist the power of your father; recollect, he is my only friend. if I refuse I forfeit all his favor, stand exposed to his vengeance and inveterate hate;—what can I do? dread question, which robs me of all fortitude, for it reminds me of that state, defenceless and forlorn, when Mr. Seamore, as my benefactor, came and snatched me from a lot, which now I call enviable, when compared with my present feelings. Poverty, think not I fear you! no, no, I smile at all those ills which attend your steps, they're nought—trifles—insignificant. Helen, dear generous girl, make me not despise myself, for if those tears are unrestrained, I'll stay, though fate, though danger should menace me; I cannot see them flow, the sight unman's me; why should you fear my safe return?

Helen, endeavouring to compose herself, to spare the sufferings of Alfred, was regardless of her own; not insensible to what he had urged, she drew from thence a small portion of consolation; his objections were reasonable, and such, that she could not oppose; if he displeased her father, what had he to hope? her fortune, also, was at his disposal—'twas then most prudent to comply with his wishes.

Captain O'Hara had been the guest of Seamore two days, when, as he was taking a solitary stroll by himself, he encountered an old friend who invited him to his house, but I would not go, said the captain; from what reason? enquired Seamore, who, by his manner rightly guessed the question would not be deemed impertinent; they play so desperately high that I

was unprovided for the attack, not thinking of staying so long. Allow me to accommodate you, said Seamore— No, indeed, returned O'Hara, I wish to avoid temptation, being a most unlucky player; he is, to be sure, a friend I greatly prize, and even losing I should consider gain, for the pleasure of enjoying his company. O'Hara had a most unaccountable method of refusing, yet, introducing some circumstance so very plausible, that acceptance generally followed. Furnished with the sum he required, for which he offered a cheque on his banker, he set out for the residence of his friend, and did not return till quite late; Seamore plainly perceived he was out of spirits, and forbore making any remark; 'twas evident the Captain had been playing a losing game; this he

learnt in the morning, not that O'Hara was meanly explanatory, but a slight hint did as well; making light of his loss, he said his friend had invited him to take revenge; he then expatiated on the inconvenience of travelling unattended, for, said he, had I my footman with me, I could send him to my banker. Grant me that honor, said Seamore, and draw for whatever sum you think proper; well, I must again trespass on your kindness; and now the Captain no more lamented the absence of his lacquey, though that he had one was a profound secret to Seamore; perhaps the Captain, like the philanthropist, who considers the whole world his own, had made a similar computation with the servants of his friends.

With no better success played

O'Hara; Seamore was extremely sorry, but the high-minded Captain begged him to think no more about the matter, protesting it was unworthy consideration. I had nothing to complain of, for my partner was a most skilful player, but could not, more than myself, command success. I believe that is generally the case, returned Seamore.

While yet speaking a letter was presented to the Captain; he eagerly broke the seal; Seamore, anxious to know its contents, reluctantly maintained the silence which politeness imposed; at the beginning O'Hara looked grave, but as he proceeded his countenance brightened. Seamore, who carefully watched each variation, caught the contagion; at length, O'Hara exclaimed, by my honor I wronged him, he

is a man of his word, though he was not punctual to time—I must to town immediately; in the meanwhile, Mr. Mordaunt can hold himself in readiness. Seamore promised compliance, and the Captain, with expressions of regret, at his hasty departure, mounted Lucksall, the horse of Seamore, probably smiling at the appropriate name; through mistake he made toward Rosinante, remarking, that use was second nature; taking an affectionate farewell of the animal he left him for his more valuable rival.

From hurry, or inadvertence, either, or both, he forgot to leave the promised cheque, and when he counted o'er the number of his dupes, with inimitable sang froid added the name of Seamore. If his arrival filled Alfred and Helen with dismay, how much

more was it increased by his departure? In despair they passed the day, expecting the next would witness their sorrow. Barclay very opportunely called to see his friend; he avoided being alone with Alfred, fearful of importunity, and was particularly guarded in his conduct.

A letter came—Helen trembled, Alfred turned pale, Barclay was all curiosity, and Seamore all agitation; quick, as by transformation, each countenance changed; what magic influence can a name impart.—Scoundrel! reiterated Seamore, rending in pieces the letter of O'Hara, for it was from him; his character was now fully developed; rage, passion, and vexation swelled the bosom of Seamore; hardly knowing what he did or said, he abused the Captain, called him by every op-

probrious epithet, and uttered unmeaning oaths; restored to reason by the words of Barclay, he revealed the cause of his invectives. O'Hara, with affected reluctance, informed him his friend was disappointed, and, that until another vacancy, Alfred could not be provided for. Mean, paltry subterfuge! ejaculated Seamore, I see through the wretched flimsy artifice; he boasted of interest to gain his own mercenary ends. And has succeeded, replied Barclay, you treated the hints I gave with indifference; trusting to your own discrimination, you gave sufference to a villain—your punishment is just. I acknowledge it, said Seamore, in a peevish accent, but assure yourself the fellow has taught me experience; I shall be more guarded for the future. Barclay perceiving recri-

mination would answer no good purpose, altered his manner:—that censure, which reflects on our judgment, is, of all, the hardest to be borne, and credulity, a fault the most generous, the last to be pardoned. When Seamore owned himself deceived, a judicious reply of—so would any man—afforded the consolation he required, and reconciled him to himself.

Barclay cast all the odium on O'Hara; reprobated his duplicity, and by appearing to justify the conduct of Seamore, had the advantage of freely descanting on his adversary's feats. Those remarks which had been rejected, if uttered in a vein of ridicule, were now not only listened to with attention, but received due weight. Seamore condemned himself without knowing he did so; the humiliating

confession failed not of pleasing Barclay, who, from the first commencement of their acquaintance, distrusted O'Hara; his caution was unheeded by Seamore, and he implicitly believed the deceitful Captain.

The triumph of O'Hara was less extensive than he thought; how simple he, who cannot tell the language of his own heart! Barclay was well versed in that, which the Captain, on all occasions used; plausibility could not impose on him; and O'Hara, without knowing he was his enemy, made many useles efforts to gain a friend. It was the ever-ruling maxim of Barclay never to betray his dislike of any man; for, said he, the disclosure cannot be productive of good, yet may promote ill-will; too often your unaccountable antipathy wounds a susceptible bosom,

therefore spare the pang, for it is in your power. If I hate a man for a real or imaginary cause, 'tis sufficient excuse for me never to admit him to my friendship; it may be said, this disguise is ungenerous, by raising expectations I never mean to realize; not so, if openly his enemy would he expect favour from me? Surely no;—then, where his loss? These motives dictated his courteous behaviour to the Captain; behaviour, that awakened hope, till at length the deceiver became deceived.

As soon as frighted reason resumed her seat, Seamore began to smile at his own folly. Shall I, said he, like the merchant, stand fruitlessly gazing at the bark which has wrecked my hopes? No, I will turn from the treacherous deep, nor tempt again its dangers.

But how to dispose of Alfred, employed his care; he held with Barclay a long consultation, at the conclusion of which Alfred was summoned, and the subject discussed in his presence, much to the satisfaction of all parties; he appeared perfectly satisfied with his future destination. The object of contention was now removed, and the study of the law, as the surrendering of a town, concluded the treaty. The hostile parties were reconciled; certain restrictions were agreed to, and to the blessings of peace, each obstacle yielded. The illumination of Alfred's countenance was the best demonstration that could be given, and might be said to produce a variegated effect. Helen, relieved from the warring emotions which disturbed the tranquillity of her bosom, looked herself again. Under

the most afflicting circumstance, a lesser evil is always preferred to a greater; if Alfred must go, 'twas better he went with Barclay, the distance was not so awful. No terrific sea, no distant land divided them; Alfred would be near; and now had Helen almost fancied within the hearing of her sighs.

What frightful dangers fancy defies! what wonderous heights she can ascend! nay, travel excursive from zone to zone; miles, leagues, had been overlooked, considered as nothing, by Seamore's romantic daughter.

Alfred, inspired with hope, cheerfully removed to the residence of Barclay; and, in a well stocked library, forgot the loss he had sustained, by being deprived of Helen's society. The charm of novelty attracted him;

the establishment of Barclay was splendid in the extreme, and his manner of living superbly elegant. Young Mordaunt contemplated with pleasure the order that every where prevailed.

CHAPTER III.

THE spirits that had for a while supported Helen, soon forsook her: for the exercise of energy 'tis necessary we should have an object; deprived of this, Helen was compelled to seek from amusement, that entertainment which it fails of affording, unless shared with a friend; of the most interesting sight, we can only remain a mute spectator, if denied a companion; the judicious remark, the smile of approbation, and the laudable spirit of enquiry, are all withheld; our very pleasure is

abridged, and that which delights two friends, is divested of charms to the lonely solitary being. Though company, though crowds, had filled the house of Seamore, Helen had still felt the loss of Alfred; each voice was that of a stranger, it wanted that happy familiarity which his alone possessed. How strange the lot of mortals! every action guided by contradiction, proves the changeableness of human nature. Helen, when in town, sighed for the country; with the accomplishment of her wishes, dissatisfied, she now desired to be in London; some may call her fickle, but I must refute the charge. With all this seeming contrariety, she was most constant—for Alfred alone she wished these changes.

Seamore left Windsor for Ramsgate, and there mixed with the gay throng

that graced the pier; Helen, amused by the concourse of people, had not an unoccupied moment; in one, she admired this, in another, that, and in all, she found sufficient to keep attention alive. At Margate she met Miss Carter, together they visited the bathing rooms, received a congé from the master of the ceremonies, and retired, to give vent to those remarks in part restrained. On entering the reading rooms, Helen was nearly petrified, by the loud voice of Miss Hardcastle, the celebrated disputant; she was labouring to give emphasis to a particular word, the modification of which, whether hard or soft, she soon rendered the former. With the tenacity of genius, I shall not pretend to say, if real or imaginary, she could not brook contradiction, and rather than wound her

susceptibility many yielded the point—a victory she partially ascribed to her own superior powers. With a look, partaking of resentment and recognition, she turned from Helen, proving at least, her memory was retentive. Seamore, profitably engaged, wasted precious time in watching the idlers whirling a tetotum at Rettison's, or contemplated beaus, whipping the donkeys of dashing belles—laudable employ, delightful amusement, sublime science, worthy of acquirement!

When the company had deserted this spot he removed to Brighton; here Helen heaved a sigh; it was an offering sacrificed at the shrine of friendship; she thought on Cecilia Granger, and a long train of melancholy reflections immediately succeeded. Mr. Granger, after the death of

his sister, had returned to London, Helen was therefore spared a meeting that, doubtless would have affected her. The unfortunate Granger, contending with hopeless love, and recent misfortune, was truly a pitiable object; his deep dejection had appealed powerfully to her heart, and from thence gained sympathy. Granger, if not possessed of shining qualities capable of exciting envy or admiration, had merit sufficient to claim a small portion of the latter; his family was respectable, and his fortune large. Anthony, the eldest of four sons, had received a liberal and expensive education, by which he was greatly benefited; his manners were polished and refined, and to them he was indebted for many pleasures to be derived from no other source. An early disappointment had

affixed to his countenance a look of severity that deterred many from cementing a friendship which had repaid the trial; he was considered an austere cynical old bachelor, and indeed it had been for years his fixed determination to verify the opinion entertained of him; but for the beauteous Helen, whose charms made an impression on him, not to be effaced by even coldness, her too apparent indifference affected, but could not discourage him; for by a strange perversity he was the more captivated. Her rejection of the Earl of Thor for awhile animated him with hope, yet he dared not flatter himself he in the least influenced her refusal. He could not accuse Helen of deception, for she had never given him reason to believe he had made the least impression on her. In Seamore

he knew he should find a powerful advocate, but he also knew the cold dictates of stern duty would be disregarded, for the warm and irresistible eloquence of interceeding love. That Alfred was the favoured object, he had no reason to doubt; and not wishing to witness the completion of his happiness, which, in his imagination, was speedily to take place, he tried what absence would produce; but it was only to love at a distance. The same passion existed in his bosom, nay glowed with more fervor; 'tis true the sight of Helen inflamed not his hopeless love, but he adored her with not less ardor; and the only good resulting from this eager sought after remedy, was, that he suffered additional pangs.

With the humours of Brighton, Seamore was highly amused; the forenoon he passed at Donaldson's, or wiled away an hour on the Stein. There fashion, in her most varied form, met his eye, obtained a smile, or courted censure: the charm of diversification their sole attraction. These trifles, insignificant as they were, deeply interested Helen. Not that dress occupied her thoughts; but as the young artist, unskilled in science, attentively examines the perfect model, to form his own by, so did Helen.—One plait gives symmetry, another adds proportion; at least, so said the learned ladies of the robe, and could she dispute their word?

Helen looked over the names in the subscription-book, and immediately beheld that of Lady Arrowsmith and her two daughters. Scarcely had she

imparted her satisfaction to Seamore, before her affected ladyship entered. She was escorted by Walter Hamilton, who, making towards Helen, demanded what book she was reading. His curiosity satisfied, each volume employed his recommendatory powers. Sated with panegyric, he enquired after Alfred.

In the mean while, Seamore was engaged in the arduous task of making a woman of quality listen, with any degree of patience, to the conversation of a plebeian. Attentive to all but him, her replies, though laconic, were sufficiently expressive to inform the listening loungers, that Seamore was considered an intruder.—Now, in Hamilton's noticing Helen, there was nothing uncommon; for many a titled youth had been enamoured with a

waiting-woman. The compliments he uttered, though meant to please his fair companion, them too were considered no degradation; they rather excited the sentiment of pity; he was flattering to deceive.

Look at yon dome, how bright it glitters! Soon as the sun withdraws its rays, all again is darkness; so, had ten thousand Lords and Dukes countenanced Seamore, let them retire, and he is still a plebeian. Borrowed lustre cannot add to our own; as light the better shows deformity, so does comparison make inferiority the more apparent. But we think not so; eager to be taken for what we are not, how many are unprofitably employed in that, which availeth nothing. The man of limited fortune wishes to be thought independent; he that is of obscure

parentage wishes to be thought well-born. The gentleman, contented to be mistaken for his groom, affords to the groom the pleasure of passing for his master. The ignoramus, satisfied if called a pedant, neglects that research which had well repaid his trouble and gratified his vanity. The man without a title sighs for one to honor him, while he that is titled seeks to dishonor it. What stress is laid on the nod of a Duke, the smile of a Viscount, or the familiar look of a Lord! To obtain such privileges, what vast sums have been sacrificed! the high-spirited have become humble, the miser generous, and the son of liberty an abject slave. What is their aim? to receive greater distinction than that to which, in reality, they are entitled.—This was the case with Seamore; his ruling pas-

sion, that of being taken for the friend of nobility.

While turning over the leaves of a folio, to his infinite pleasure, Lord Preston entered. Reaching across Seamore, his lordship accidentally knocked the book out of his hand, saying, familiarly, "I'm prodigiously aukward." This, in another man, he had resented as an insult; instead of which, the would-be apology was accepted with rapture, and his lordship's affability and condescension loudly praised. At the next meeting, the Peer, by some untoward accident again incommoded Seamore. What a source of delight! for it begat familiarity; but then it gave birth to competition. His lordship gave grand entertainments, Seamore did also. Preston had a variety of carriages, Seamore

sported as many, inequality was forgotten. The one made feasts for his own amusement, the other imitated them to his own ruin. Lord Preston admired a horse of Seamore's, which had cost him five hundred guineas; would his lordship do him the honor of accepting it? Lords are not invulnerable; and the horse, unconscious of his elevation, cantered from Seamore's stable. A snuff-box, set round with brilliants, attracted the notice of Preston; it was actually beautiful; could he purchase one similar? Instantly the box was presented; and Seamore received in return for what was of immense value, an invitation to dinner—An invitation to dinner! exclaimed Helen, fearful of a mistake. Yes, replied her delighted father, his lordship has indeed done me that ho-

nor. Dear-bought honor! though considered a mere trifle by Seamore. Yet, he had denied that very morning the loan of ten pounds to an indigent worthy man! Unwise Seamore! one ten pounds had well secured the honor you so eagerly sought.

Timothy Merton, well known on the Royal Exchange, and at Lloyd's, was a merchant of great respectability. Of an industrious, persevering disposition, he eat not the bread of idleness; fond of maxims, his favorite was, that the early riser always thrives. Of this opinion, it may be supposed, he did not sacrifice much at the shrine of Morpheus. Punctual to business, but more punctual in his payments, his reputation was unblemished, and every effort crowned with success.

Mrs. Merton, who thought it no small honor to be the wife of a British merchant, began to feel ambition struggling in her bosom. What matters, said she, our circumstances being flourishing? if we make no show, we may as well be poor. Their family increasing, she petitioned her husband for a summer retreat; the young ones would never enjoy their health, if stived up in Austin Friars. Accordingly, they were removed to Pancras.

Ambition, that restless spirit not long satisfied, again tormented Mrs. Merton; and she incessantly importuned her husband, till Pancras was deserted for the more refined air of Chelsea.

Wishes are prolific; the gratification of one begets many, and Merton had soon to lament his unfortunate pliabi-

lity. Extravagance will diminish the largest capital; and the result was, the failure of Merton. What mattered the tears of compunction, shed by his wife? they were unavailing.

Tim. bore his misfortunes with fortitude, exhorted her to do the same, and said all that tenderness could suggest. He was now to experience many changes and vicissitudes, till at length he conducted the affairs of a very great mercantile house. His salary enabled him to support his family tolerably well, and the smile of content rendered less rugged the harsh features of adversity.

Thus passed many years, till Merton became a widower. His young and promising family were also snatched from him. Deprived by this fatal blow of all fortitude, he yielded him-

self a prey to grief. He had now no inducement to exercise energy; his spirit was broken; and resigning his situation, which he was no longer able to fill, he left the metropolis. The blessings and tears of many followed poor Tim. Subdued, he showed the grateful creatures he had yet something to bestow; but it was only a tear,—invaluable treasure!—Pity, preserve the sacred drop, that you may return it, should sorrow afflict the amiable Merton.

With broken fortune, and a broken constitution, he visited Brighton. Extreme distress, brought on by ill health, reduced him to the lowest ebb of misery; and to obtain a scanty subsistence, he turned index-maker. Whether successful in this line, I shall not pretend to say; for under the title of gra-

titude, he did not refer to any of Seamore's works; perhaps, there were none extant.

Seamore, one morning taking his usual seat at Donaldson's, opposite Lord Preston, unluckily espied Tim. Merton. He made a low bow; this Seamore either did or would not see. Tim. more ready to excuse than condemn, thought this silent mark of respect had really not been seen.

How do you do, Mr. Seamore? how is your daughter?—What a degradation, to be thus familiarly addressed, and by such a being too!—Seamore, with a fashionable start, had recourse to his glass, before he could recollect the speaker, though the rising of his colour bespoke he was no stranger. She is pretty well, he at length replied, and soon left the library.

Poor Tim.'s heart was full, and but for shame he had wept. With glistening eyes, he looked after Seamore. He heaved a sigh ; it was an expressive one, and seemed to say, there was a time, when you had acted otherwise.

Now lords, as well as commoners, have their passions ; and the one most predominant in Preston was curiosity. He observed the confusion of Seamore, when accosted by Merton, and longed to know the cause. This he communicated to his gentleman ; the hint was sufficient. Immediately gratification was sought. Supercilious pride wrung from Merton a secret that had for ever remained concealed. Susceptible to a degree, he was not wont to be treated thus ; and wounded pride increased the poignancy of his feelings.

CHAPTER IV.

MERTON, in the days of his prosperity, had conferred many favours on Seamore's father, who was likewise a merchant; but as success does not always attend the deserving, Mr. Seamore had to contend with great difficulties. While troubles crowded, and oppressed this worthy man, those of a domestic nature pressed still harder. The vicious habits of Edward, his only son, called forth the most painful solicitude, and filled his paternal bosom with anxious fears.

Young Seamore, too indolent to exert himself; and too proud, to owe his support to commerce, had the meanness to become indebted to the credulity of tradesmen for the supplies afforded his youthful follies; and these debts, so carelessly contracted, had remained for ever unpaid, were it not that the prudent merchant possessed more genuine honor and real dignity of character, than his gentleman son, who troubled not himself about his plebeian creditors; doubtless, considering them sufficiently honored by the notice poverty compelled him to take of them. The independence, acquired by a close application to business, he thought could never be better employed, than in contributing to support the luxury of a gentleman; but his father thought not so. Of this, his son became con-

vinced; for at his death, he found his prodigality had considerably impoverished a father, determined to teach his son respect for commerce, by showing him its utility. But before that period, he underwent many trials; trials that he had sunk under, but for the friendly assistance of his friend, Tim. Merton. By unwearied assiduity and industry, he amassed a handsome competence, and in time was allowed to be very rich. When misfortune overtook Merton, the grateful Seamore forgot not his former kindness, and would have made every return in his power. But the pride of Merton intervened; and not till his suggestion of superintending the business of his friend was acceded to, could he reconcile himself to receive a favour. His salary was liberal, and much beyond

what his abilities merited. What a solace to his benevolent heart, to find that this true friend had not forgot his own adversity. Seamore he had raised from distress, to soothe, in the hour of necessity, his calamities. When sorrow compelled him to resign his situation, 'twas with regret he parted with Seamore; but how different the conduct of the son! His manner was altered, and he treated Merton with every indignity. Meeting at Brighton, necessity urged him to solicit the loan of ten pounds; this Seamore absolutely refused, while, at the same time, he was loading Lord Preston with presents.

Seamore, who often boasted of his father's fortune, thought fit to sink the merchant, (doubtless, thinking it a disgrace). On the disclosure made by

Merton, Preston was so much astonished, that he showed the merchant's son a cool face. Perhaps, his suspicious lordship was afraid Seamore had deceived him, in regard to his property, as well as his birth. In that case, adieu to all advantage.—Seamore, enraged at Preston's conduct, lamented not more his disappointment, than he did the expence he had been at; his punishment was deserved and highly merited.

Helen with pleasure heard his determination of returning speedily to town. He wished to hide his diminished head; the thoughts of seeing Alfred filled her with pleasure. She was anxious to know how he liked the study of the Law; acquainted with his aversion to Barclay, she feared he was unhappy, and accused herself as the cause. But

for me, he had been where no Barclay's could annoy him.—But Alfred was not as uncomfortable as her fears surmised. Familiarity subdued aversion. The generous mind is incapable of harbouring continual animosity, and the kindness of Barclay banished his former dislike. It was only on rare or uncommon occasions, that Barclay was out of humour. His vivacity was never-failing; a diversity of amusements successively engaged him, and called off his attention. Well qualified for a charioteer, he excelled in the art of driving; would with pleasure recount his hair-breadth escapes, descant on the propriety of keeping the right side of the road, and relate how many accidents he had thereby avoided. At every pugilistic meeting he attended as an amateur; with infinite adroitness,

could tell who was a glutton, and who was abstemious. Well versed in the game laws, he would tell every man how far his privilege extended, reprobate infringement, and follow every pursuit but that which was laudable.

Alfred, of a contemplative cast, had much leisure to indulge meditation; he improved his mind, and prosecuted his studies with unwearied assiduity. But for all this, he had a motive superior to self-advantage; he wished to render himself worthy of Helen, and for her sake, made light of every difficulty. In absence the passions are warmer, imagination heightens the glow, and decks in gayest colours, each incident; trifles insignificant gain importance, engage and occupy the mind. The anticipated approbation of Helen bestowed on Al-

fred the reward he most prized. An inanimate shrub, a senseless tree, become the objects of our tenderest solicitude; and from what cause?—They awaken fond remembrance, call forth sensibility; because the being we love bestowed on them attention, unconsciously we do the same. And should philosophers call this indulgence weakness, tell them this amiable susceptibility is the very soul, the very essence of love.

On Seamore's arrival in town, Alfred paid him an early visit, as well from respect as inclination, and was surprised at the reception he received. Seamore, perhaps, humbled by recent disappointment, was less haughty; and more affable, he regarded Alfred with a look partaking of scrutiny and kindness. It was, however, indefina-

ble; and, doubtless, might have excited curiosity, had not Alfred and Helen by their looks, confessed how far the bliss of meeting exceeded the pangs of separation.

Love, as the exile restored to native home, sported with the fetters that had for awhile confined him. Pleasure, a self-invited guest, received the cordial welcome, took the seat, where, warm from the heart, each wish spontaneous flows. And now busily roved the eager eye, to trace the well remembered feature; but useless this, for memory, true to her charge, had not forgot the slightest look, the smallest grace, nay, added charms irresistible.

Next in rotation comes friendship. Barclay and Seamore approach each other; the extended hand and well regulated look, is all that can be de-

scribed; concealed from vulgar eye, the emotions of their bosom none boldly dared to pry.—Swift through the fashionable world flew the tidings. Seamore wanted not for visitors; and Helen, when alone exclaimed, "Oh! but for this, London, dear spot! where dwells my Alfred; how should I like thee!" This was no time for repining; joy had not yet withdrawn the soft influence; the rapt senses, in willing captivity, suffered the delusion to detain them; sober reason, that abstemious child, shrunk back abashed; the frugal meal could not regale the being revelling in luxury.

Alfred, somewhat more collected, marvelled within himself at the behaviour of Seamore: surely, said he, he must have some secret motive. But what that motive could be, he was at

a loss even to guess. The more he conjectured, the more he was perplexed; doubt and mystery involved him in a still deeper labyrinth; perhaps, he thinks by kindness to subdue me. Overwhelmed with gratitude, can I destroy my benefactor's happiness? impossible! He judges by his own integrity. Oh! fatal passion, at once my pleasure and my pain, will nothing root thee from my heart? is there no means to bid thee cease? No, no; while life animates this wretched frame, you will still exist, warm, and inspire my bosom. Like fuel, added to the flames, you consume and devour me. One look, one smile from Helen makes me at once the hardened villain. I scoff at the pangs of her father, consider them my proudest triumph, for they bear testimony of Helen's love

Henry Arrowsmith had left college, and now resided at his father's house. He forgot not Alfred, and honoured him with the most distinguished notice. Courteous and condescending, he required not the aid of supercilious pride to repress familiarity; the dignity of his manners were sufficient repulse. His father, with true nobility of character, added lustre to his title, and proved that the highest rank of a gentleman is best derived from himself, for it can even ennoble a Lord.

Arrowsmith had neither the affectation of youth, or the severity of age. He smiled not to please another, or to be thought an admirer of wit, but because he felt the mirthful inclination. Singularity was banished from his dress and address; the former he conceived non-essential, and the latter more cal-

culated to disgust than improve. We fly from reproof, when its features appear rugged; but when decked with smiles, we are insensibly attracted.—His censure was directed to folly, not to mankind; for he could not find fault with the world, from which he derived his sole pleasure. Laying no restraint on the inclination of others, he did not wish they should sacrifice theirs to his own; this was a kind of limited freedom that he scorned. The failings of his wife and daughters filled him with pain, but not of a selfish kind; 'twas for their welfare he sighed. With the fondest parental care, he corrected the errors of Henry, and above all, sought to root out pride; for in that evil, he saw the source of every other. Worth, not quality, claimed his respect; he, therefore, sanctioned the

growing partiality of his son for Alfred.

The manners of Mordaunt were insinuating, but not rendered so from art; nature, and a sweet disposition, alone dictated them. Tenacious of offending another, he was more than tenacious of his own honor. This recommendatory trait it was that gained him the esteem of Lord Arrowsmith. —Henry would not hear the accommodating language of a parasite, but the spirited replies of one, who dared to assert his right and maintain his own opinion.

Seamore, flattered by his aggrandizement, spared no expence to make his appearance, at least, do credit to his illustrious entertainer, reminding him of the advantage he might reap. Alfred, above being influenced by

self-interest, remained insensible to his hints. Lady Arrowsmith and her blooming daughters were delighted with him. He was so very obliging! so very serviceable! The compliance, which politeness dictated, they mistook for sycophancy. When beauty sued, and softly pled, could he refuse, though the object of solicitation was a dog, a fan, or a bird?

Emma, the most affected of the three, singled out Alfred to gratify her caprice; on him she practised all her bewitching arts; but from this seeming playfulness she derived a malicious satisfaction, in rendering him contemptible. She knew his generous nature, and worked upon its softness. Satisfied at any rate to obtain compliance, she was not humbled by the mortifying conviction, that Alfred was

secretly pitying her weakness and folly. Not her fascinating smiles, not her sorceries, but the friendship he bore her brother, made him the acquiescent being, whom she contemned. Too delicate to reprove, he preserved a silence highly meritorious. Yet he failed not of drawing a comparison between Helen and the conceited Emma; the more he admired the one, the more glaring appeared the errors of the other. Oh! heavens, exclaimed he, with emphasis, were my Helen such a being, how I should grieve, mourn, do all but rejoice, as I am now enabled, at her exalted qualities. Yet unconsciousness renders Emma Arrowsmith happy; early taught to think she can do no otherwise than right, her grossest errors are excuse-

able, and others, not herself, alone to blame.

But Emma heard not this; nay, even thought no more about it, as, with mirthful smile, she recounted to her indulgent mamma the indignities offered Alfred. Lady Arrowsmith was in a hurry, and could hardly stop. Now do, dear good mamma; listen for a moment, and see if I don't do the very next thing you ask me. Her ladyship could not refuse, and yielded to the entreaties of her daughter:—where was the becoming admonition, the reproof of a parent? Yet could she condemn youthful folly, when she had not (according to her own opinion) passed that age herself; 'twas unreasonable then to expect more prudence from her.

Helen, with unspeakable pleasure, beheld the cheerfulness of her father; Ah! thought she, had he always been thus, how many anxious hours I had been spared! He has, at last, listened to reason, and finds 'tis impossible to restrain love. Now, whatever before appeared as an obstacle, not only receded, but even added to the self-drawn picture of happiness. Seamore, finding their passion deep rooted, was supposed to place Alfred with Barclay, in order to render him equal to the alliance. O'Hara was forgotten; and what arose from compulsion was imputed to inclination. With what delusions, the human mind is capable of being pleased! Chimera itself can be imagined a reality. I will not exactly say, this was the case with Helen. Joy illumined her countenance; and all she

said and did was attended with that lightness and vivacity, which bespeaks the heart at ease; her's, indeed, was truly so.

CHAPTER V.

WHERE can Barclay stay? said Seamore.—Scarce had he pronounced these words, when he beheld a carriage draw up. It was stage-coach built, with entire new harness, and four beautiful blood horses. Two gentlemen were seated on the roof, but Seamore did not know either. He looked at the servants, who rode behind on a seat over the basket; with them he was also unacquainted. He next contemplated the driver; but there he found nothing to gratify his curiosity.

Look, Alfred, said he, his whip is by Griffiths. Do you observe the mail-horn in the handle? Yes, replied Alfred, who admired its novelty. They enquired for Barclay; and being informed he was not there, drove off in high style. For full an hour Seamore remained at the window, as if transfixed by the sight of some wonderful object. Seriousness marked his features; what were barouches, tandems, landaus, or ought else, compared to this stage-coach vehicle?

Seamore sighed; he could not forget the magnet of attraction, and as soon as he saw Barclay, imparted to him his feelings. I thought of surprising you, replied Barclay, with as much delight as a child of ten feels, at hearing a piece of work praised, which is her performance. The carriage be-

longed to Barclay; Seamore expressed his admiration, and to show he felt what he said, ordered one of the same construction;—who could do more?

Love, 'tis said, delights to dwell in retirement, cheers best the temple of solitude, and soothes the tranquil, pensive scene. Had not that of Helen and Alfred been transferable, it would have fled with wild affright from the tumult and confusion which reigned at Brunswick Square. A grand entertainment was to be given by Seamore, now floated on his ear, like soft music; at which was present, Lords Arrowsmith, Harley, Powell; Earls Thor, Wakefield, Monford, Randall; Ladies Arrowsmith, Glyn, Powell, the Dowager Lady D'Arcy; Countesses Wakefield, Randall; with all the principal leaders of ton and fashion.

To do justice to the taste and elegance of Mr. Seamore, we must say, the entertainment was truly superb, nothing being wanted, that could render it agreeable to his illustrious guests. Like panegyric, from the pen of flattery, he listened only to its insinuation, regardless of every other consideration, insensible to the expence; but what was more, insensible to the ridicule, which unmercifully attended his imitating nobility.—Forsooth, exclaimed one, (this was, observe, among themselves,) the insolence of these plebeians is past bearing. Poor simple creature! said Lady Arrowsmith, he adopted my plan, suppose employed the same workmen. Yet her indiscreet ladyship spared not her own invention, and what all her friends had extolled as exquisitely designed; this she probably

forgot, but it was Seamore whom she censured.

Could Helen escape? impossible! Did you remark the demeanor of that poor thing? said the Countess of Wakefield to the Countess of Randall. Remark her! could I do otherwise? The simpleton excited my risibility. She has fell into the extreme; wishing to avoid that familiarity which distinguishes many of the vulgar, her reserve is equally as absurd. Impute it to her rusticity, rejoined the other; in vain plebeians send their city-bred offspring to fashionable boarding-schools, to acquire that polish, which is alone our happy prerogative. What is the result? Foolish notions are imbibed, and some low choice stamps the truth, that imitation cannot equal the original. For see, how abominably ridi-

culous the girl makes herself with the poor woman's son! ('tis unnecessary to say Alfred was meant). I suppose, resumed the fair speaker, she imagines she is practising the height of disinterestedness. Superior to selfish considerations, she tells the humble youth her heart is his, unalterably his.

Alfred, unconscious that he afforded conversation to personages so august, sipped pleasure as with honeyed taste, breathed gales of bliss, and quaffed fresh joy, as Helen met his raptured gaze.—How solitary he, who lives but for himself! what can employ his contracted thoughts increased his woe, abridged his pleasure, when self alone inspires. But Alfred had a superior aim; for Helen his bosom glowed, in her were all his wishes centered. With amiable interestedness, he claimed a

reward; it was a smile. Valuable recompence! prized above the greatest treasure. Thought, that spares no condition, would occasionally intrude, and remind him of what he was; how soft the swelling of that bosom, which gratitude expands! He who cannot receive a favour, is incapable of conferring one; if recollection wounded, then came the balm; 'twas himself she loved. The playful deity, with sportive frolic, hovered round the heart of Helen, enjoyed its fluttering, and breathed soft thrills, that heightened passion, whispered fears that made security more valuable, and filled each avenue with the fond wish that defies all language to describe, undefinable, unintelligible. In vain the struggle; sighs spontaneous issue warm with the

feelings, swiftly fly, and receive shelter in a congenial bosom.

When joy borders on extravagance 'tis salutary it should meet with a slight check; the professional duties of Alfred, or rather the voice of Barclay, called him from the presence of Helen. Would fashionable parents act like Barclay, the most rigid censurer might lay aside his pen, or at least spare animadversions on the rising generation. Neglecting his business, and guilty of every folly, he would not suffer Alfred to do the same; his conduct, in this respect was praiseworthy. Perhaps Barclay had seen his error; perhaps he cared not, that another should enjoy himself; be that as it may, flow the cause from whatever source it would, the effect proved beneficial to Alfred.

A visit from Mr. Granger interested deeply the feelings of Helen; regarding his sable habiliments with emotion, she burst into a flood of tears. Seamore likewise seemed moved, and with much sensibility, attempted to soothe the unhappy Granger, but all his endeavours to restore serenity proved ineffectual; the tears of Helen, like the keen probe, penetrated most acutely his yet green wounds. The loss of his sister, and his own accumulated misfortunes, nearly subdued him; ashamed of the weakness he had betrayed, but more influenced by its effect on Helen, he assumed a something like composure. The semblance served to deceive those who wished to believe it real, for their own sakes; it spared those pangs that must have followed the knowledge of his unhappi-

ness. Though capable of every virtue, his actions were not tinctured with romantic enthusiasm, and, as he loved sincerely, he was divested of that scrupulous delicacy which affects to shrink from receiving a reluctant hand. With the well founded hope of a rational being, he looked forward, with pleasing expectation, to the happy period, when kindness, and unwearied attention, might subdue the reluctance of Helen; and by that strange fatality which presides over lovers, he could not shun her society—nay, courted it. Miss Seamore, he flattered himself, had expressed more than usual sympathy, and enquired with greater interest after his health; were not these indications of tenderness? at least Granger was resolved to construe them into such.

Helen, softened by the absence of

Alfred, was more susceptible, and wished not to increase the sufferings of Granger; her conduct, which was its result, served to deceive him. He believed her moved, and flattered himself with the fondest hopes, they were increased. He saw not Alfred—was he discarded? the bare idea imparted rapture, and self predominating, he wished such might be the case.

When alone with Seamore, he introduced the subject nearest his heart, or at least, fancied he did, but his words were so ambiguous, and so foreign from the purpose, that a being, less comprehensive than Seamore, had called them unintelligible. Granger was informed Alfred was with Barclay; but this was not the only information he wished—did Helen still love Alfred? he would have asked. Doubt and

fear again perplexed him; he dropped a few ingenious hints, but Seamore, being no lover, misunderstood them; all Granger then depended on, was his own observation; he narrowly watched Helen, not a look escaped him—every word underwent an examination. His conversation grew entertaining, because divested of that gloom which rendered it tedious. Helen, without knowing the cause, admired the change—she listened with attention; this was another striking proof of attachment! Granger hailed it with extasy. Emboldened by the encouragement he received, he never once reflected, that the pleasure of Helen might flow, as it did, from friendship; if she felt the same indifference toward him, her love for Alfred was unabated. —Report began to speak of his frequent

visits to the Arrowsmith family, and while they aggrandized him, they were thought to degrade those illustrious personages. Some honored him with the post of buffoon to her ladyship, others said he was toad-eater to his lordship, but the most probable, seemed, that he was private tutor to Henry, for it was well known he had received a liberal education. Now these were the conjectures of many, but as the reader knows he filled none of these capacities it is unnecessary to contradict the assertion.

Variety is the very essence of news, for that which is old fails to interest. A brain, more prolific than all the rest, invented a tale, so calculated to please, that it was found adapted to the taste of every one:—Emma Arrowsmith was desperately in love with Alfred

Mordaunt! no, you are surely jesting? said Mrs. Butler to Miss Argyle; I speak from good authority, returned the latter, for I had occular demonstration. Well to be sure, I must not contradict you, but the disparity is so great, that one would think it could not be. What will you say, when I tell you I saw a löve-letter, written by Emma, to Alfred; it was shewn me by her Abigail;—this placed the matter beyond dispute, and was considered conclusive.

Alfred was beloved by Emma, and, of course, could do no otherwise than return her passion; a Gretna-Green affair was expected.—Heigh-ho! poor Helen, nothing remained but for her to break her heart, the catastrophe would then be com-

plete—and the whole to conclude with remarks on ingratitude, the inconstancy of man, and the irresistible power of love.

CHAPTER VI.

As is generally the case, she, whom it most concerned, was the last to hear the tale, and when she did, she treated it lightly, perhaps from its improbability. Helen despised jealousy, not but what, had Alfred really proved faithless, she might have fell a victim to that fatal passion, for, on more than one occasion, she had experienced a pang very similar. Granger was almost tempted to wish the report true, but when he saw the same looks of fondness beam from the eyes of Alfred, he

sighed mentally—there is no hope for me.

Helen, at perfect ease, laughed at the tale she did not believe; no, Alfred, said she, the last thing I accuse you with shall be ingratitude; I know you well; Emma Arrowsmith could never gain your love—you look beyond mere adventitious circumstances. Helen, decided in her good opinion of Alfred, rejected every thought that militated against it. Gifted with great stability, she was not easily warped, and acted with that discretion which was her boast.

Hamilton, who had favoured Alfred with a seat in his tandem, made his appearance, and bestowed on Helen the most extravagant compliments, which were received with more than usual attention, perhaps from the pleasure his

companion afforded her ; elated at the distinction, Walter pursued his good fortune, till Helen repented of her good humour. Pray thee, hold your peace, said Hamilton to Alfred, who was ridiculing the conceited fop ; Miss Seamore, with all the fellow's gravity, he has become my disciple, 'pon honor ; grown quite a ladies' man ; 'twas indeed a wonder Emma spared him ; the philosopher has relinquished abstruse science for that more pleasing, of painting ridicules, and designing work-bags;—do not you think he is all the better for the change ? The mantling colour of Helen betrayed that the question displeased her, but it was too insignificant to obtain a serious thought, and she replied with equal frivolity. Do you doubt my veracity ? said Hamilton. The subject is too trifling, she

replied. Oh, he who deceives in trifles, will in weightier affairs; stubborn facts cannot be denied; plead guilty, Alfred. During the altercation the petulance of Alfred convinced Helen there was some truth in the charge, and though she would have despised herself had she felt jealous, yet his visible chagrin made on her a greater impression than the fact itself. Alfred really had been consulted about the colour of a ridicule, and well acquainted with the tenacity of love, wished it not to be mentioned. This student of the four-in-hand club, was doubtless thinking of a carriage, said he, when he talked about colours. No! no! retorted Walter, unless a good turn employed my thoughts; at this he nodded significantly at Alfred, remarking, the further he proceeded he should leave him be-

hind on the road. Helen observing the aim of Walter, disappointed him; and, by her vivacity, reassured Alfred. The masquerade of Lady Arrowsmith became the subject of conversation. This perspective entertainment, said Hamilton, will, I dare say, be very dashing; in what character will you appear, Miss Seamore? I shall not tell you, answered Helen; ladies are prodigiously fond of secrets, though the fault is, the not being able to keep them; I intend to wear a domino. Alfred has promised to scare the ignoramus's with his learned lectures; he means to personate Socrates. Undoubtedly, said Alfred, I am to be honored with Hamilton's company. You audacious mortal, replied the other, what a compliment you are passing on me; but for the law I would

chastise you. Oh! we'll wave that, said Alfred, smiling. By no neans Mr. Mordaunt; in the presence of a lady we must not talk of duels; besides, I am in want of a second, unless I seek Captain O'Hara, and you shall have Mr. Foster Walcott. This badinage produced a hearty laugh, and Hamilton made his parting bow, accompanied by Alfred.

The news of their departure was highly acceptable to Mrs. Wright—in she came—was Miss Seamore disengaged? oh, yes, I see you are, was the answer she gave herself. Now, Miss, about this masquerade, that is, I mean, do you go in character? oh! if Miss Egerton was but here; on every similar occasion Mrs. Wright expressed a similar wish, which was as vain as it was ridiculous. Helen then

informed her, by the particular desire of Lady Arrowsmith, she was to appear as Corinna, the celebrated mistress of Ovid. She had strongly opposed the idea; but her father, without regarding whether she could support the character or no, over-ruled her objections. What! disoblige Lady Arrowsmith: no, sooner should Helen appear ridiculous. Mrs. Wright, with due formality, delivered her opinion. She was sure Miss Seamore would make an inimitable Corinna—Ah! what could prevent her? she possessed powers equal, if not superior to Ovid himself. How weak he or she who believes the voice of flattery, which would fain persuade them to attempt impossibilities. Helen was more rational; but as much depended on the invention of Mrs. Wright, she felt no inclination to

thwart her. It may be asked, what assistance could Helen require?—That which is sought by the general, whose aim is conquest. If robes win hearts, who would neglect them? Where is that senseless mortal on whom applause makes no impression?

The day of days arrived, the spacious drawing-rooms of Lady Arrowsmith were converted into the temple of Juno. The enraged wife of Jupiter was seen returning to her temple, after the supposed transformation of Cinara's beauteous daughters. The former, whom her ladyship represented, was supplicating the incensed goddess to avert their doom. Yielding to her efficacious tears, Juno relented; and, immediately, the steps leading to the temple vanished. Amelia and Emma resumed their original form,

and dazzled each beholder with their transcendent charms. Never was an assumed character so strictly appropriate. Lady Arrowsmith, yet more vain than Cinara, had represented her, to compliment the beauty of her daughters, by preferring them to Juno.—Helen, as Corinna, did justice to her classical lover, and replied with great aptness to some satirical verses, repeated by Walter Hamilton in the character of a modern critic. When she pointed out several flagrant inaccuracies, he ingenuously confessed how vast the difference between writing ourselves, and criticising the works of others. Barclay, humorously attired, gave himself out for a professional gentleman; being asked his profession, he, with affected pomp, answered, Physic. A variety of diseases were

mentioned, all of which, he said, the medicine he vended would cure; affirming it to be a sovereign balm for every disease. A punster enquired if it was gold? No, replied the mountebank, but 'tis more precious; it promotes health, strength, and longevity, renders life pleasant and agreeable; in fact, is so invaluable, that its properties cannot be described. Henry Arrowsmith, as a member of the Whip Club, proved that his usefulness was more laudable than the active spirit which urged the gamester, whom Alfred personated, not only to his own, but the ruin of others; upon which, Seamore, disguised in the dress of a seer, made some very shrewd remarks. The foreteller of events asked permission of the company to read aloud, the contents of his scroll. With much

gravity, he unfolded a paper of prodigious size. Members! members! said he, with a pause, there are some very useful to society; but of the class, to which you belong, Sir, (bowing to Henry), I fear, little can be said in their favour, unless it be by way of comparison. Now, for instance, we'll say the gamester; how will after ages speak of him? Luxury and effeminancy has reduced many a state; vice and profligacy also. But these evils, when known, may be shunned. Let us describe a being, soft and insinuating, to appearance possessed of every social virtue, gifted with the most rare companionable qualities. This deceiver introduces you to the gaming-table; ruin and devastation is in the introduction, your fortune is lost, your health impaired, your family dishonor-

ed by some act of desperation he tempts you to commit, with the vain hope of recovering your loss; and the ultimatum is, irremediable misery. When compared with such a monster, the members of thé Whip Club claim that negative praise, which we bestow on what is too insignificant to excite our censure.—With the utmost precipitation the seer left his auditors, probably, to avoid their animadversions.

With infinite spirit and humour, the characters were supported; though on some, the ridiculing of themselves sit very aukward. A person, possessed of great wit, disguised as Silenus, made some excellent and pointed observations on the ridiculous fashion of donkey riding. He complimented the metropolis, by saying, he scarce met a donkey. Among the lower class,

said he, simplicity may yet be discovered; for here and there, I beheld a donkey laden with brick-dust or greens. Your gentry are wiser, said the driver; for if there is such a thing as simplicity in them, they tread it under foot; doubtless, alluding to the beau's heels. Measter, quoth he, could I but get to Margate, I might make a fine sight of money by this animal.—Silenus being asked, Why he quitted Arcadia? replied, from the laudable motive of showing mankind their folly. By chusing my pastime, they closely imitate the companion of Bacchus; and that he has otherwise influenced them, I do not scruple to say. With that, he hurried his donkey away.

The morning came, and with it languor which succeeded gaiety. Many now wished they had remained at home.

Oh! human nature. Some were pleased, others displeased; and among the latter, Helen Seamore. She was more than displeased, she was unhappy.—Alfred had behaved with a degree of coldness, that astonished her. In vain she reviewed her conduct, in order to discover if any unguarded expression had given him umbrage. Let me not judge with haste, said she; and with a smiling countenance she met Alfred at the breakfast-table. An air of constraint marked his actions; a something like consciousness convinced her his manner was not without design. He spoke little, sighed often, and throughout appeared embarrassed.—If she addressed him, he looked confused, answered vaguely, and like one who fears a discovery, would hardly venture to speak.

It may be reasonably supposed, Helen was an attentive observer of all this. Was he offended? was he displeased with any thing? These were the questions she incessantly asked herself, but they were unanswerable.

CHAPTER VII.

The heart of Helen beat convulsively, tears came to her aid; fatally convinced of Alfred's infidelity, her sorrow rivalled all description. As love is the most tender passion, so is neglect the severest torment, that can be inflicted; for, as it divests us of pity, it leaves resentment unappeased, and perpetuates the grievance, till the offence becomes augmented.

I have said, Helen was fatally convinced of Alfred's infidelity, so she was; his ingratitude wounded her to

the very soul, and like some mighty shock, robbed her of all presence of mind; she was unprepared for the blow—it therefore fell heavier, like the being deprived of every resource, she felt forlorn indeed; what were former joys, as pleasant to the wretched, they but mocked her grief; a strong mind, when first attacked by misfortune, feels an undefinable sensation, bordering on listlessness, which cannot be described, it flies from the object that afflicts it, to every other, without finding a resource; this was the case with Helen. If any one wishes to know what another feels, let them, I say, undergo the same trials; Helen now, was thoroughly acquainted with the pang of unrequited love, no longer a stranger to the sufferings of Granger; she sincerely pitied them, but,

mere pity was not what he wanted, and nothing more could she bestow.

The sanguine traveller, who expects to find a blooming, picturesque country, turns with dismay, from the gloomy, sterile prospect, that affords no pleasure. Helen when young, joy strewed with roses, the path she trod; because, the same traced by the footsteps of Alfred, had fondly fancied no storm could approach, because a transient sun, had concealed the lurking cloud; pitiless fell the storm, on her defenceless head, it chilled her bosom, dreary appeared each prospect, and she pronounced the world a chaos, because her mind was such;—oh! Alfred cruel, and inconstant, exclaimed she, the splendor of Emma Arrowsmith, has dazzled you, possess her then! and be happy if you can; but, if recollec-

tion, honor, justice, truth, still exist in your bosom, you must remember with compunction, Helen Seamore; she has loved—oh! heavens still loves you with an undivided heart: ungrateful being! is it thus, you requite? but I will not reproach, nor even to myself repeat the favours conferred on you.

Alfred, scarce ever at Brunswick Square, seemed wholly to neglect Seamore, whom he was wont to call his benefactor; but with forbearance the most laudable, Seamore spared remarks on his conduct; what could be his motives? perhaps, like too many of his predecessors, flattered by the notice of a peer, he had forgot his plebian patron; or, in other words, mayhap his turn was served. These were the conclusions of those, who

foremost in detecting the ingratitude of another, overlooked their own. But true it was, Alfred, was the constant guest of Lord Arrowsmith, and the constant companion of Henry.

Now pointed looks, and half suppressed smiles, penetrated the very heart of Helen; not that she had any aversion to looks, or smiles, but she comprehended their meaning, and few relish that kind of condolence, which partakes of triumph. A demi-sneer, graced the features of Miss Powis, as she enquired after Alfred; Helen possessed self command, and made no betrayal to gratify her, she accordingly desisted; but, when no longer in the presence of Miss Powis, her tears flowed unrestrained.

Seamore rarely mentioned Alfred, but when he did, 'twas evident, he

felt more than he chose to express. Helen, narrowly watched Barclay, from that son of Momus, she could gather no intelligence; the same pleasant looks marked his features, when speaking of a friend, or enemy; he never used invective, calling it the weapon of idiots, which excites strife, but cannot promote good. Some hints that were dropped, renewed the solicitude of Helen, but, they were too obscure to inform her of Alfred's situation, yet sufficient to keep suspence alive. Each moment her agony increased, and the disguise she was compelled to use, proved more than she could support; her spirits became depressed, and to the most fatal dejection she yielded. Alfred, she now pitied, as a neglected being, whom nobody concerned themselves about. No

longer influenced by motives of resentment, the softest sensibility subdued her. The compassionate Helen felt interested, as she would for a deserted stranger.—Alfred had a double claim on her pity; and the philanthropic glow animated her bosom, it throbbed with unknown energy. Love was forgotten, sympathy alone prevailed and inspired her with the true zeal of genuine friendship. Undaunted by the fear of danger, she would have explored savage wilds, hideous deserts; but she was forbid betraying more than the cold concern of a mere stranger. Seamore, intent on making observations, let nothing escape him. In spite of *finesse*, he plainly perceived Helen mourned the absence of Alfred. To deceive him was impossible; but Helen fancied she did.

Barclay paid them a casual visit; the hope of Helen revived, for with him came Alfred. But how altered his looks! Pale was his countenance, vivacity illumined not his downcast eye. He relents, thought Helen, as with the kindest expressions she addressed him. For a moment he appeared engaged; but soon relapsed into a state of abstraction, which much surprised her. Perhaps, he is moved by my tenderness, said she, mentally; he thinks it is to regain his love, and the idea pains him. Enthusiastic and ardent, immediately the bare supposition was considered a reality; and Alfred received all the reward for those generous struggles imputed to him.

The beauty of Emma was great; that he loved her appeared beyond a doubt; but that she returned his pas-

sion, Helen was far from believing; the greater, therefore, her sympathy for Alfred,—he would be miserable for life!—A soft sigh escaped her, warm from that bosom he had so keenly wounded. But Helen forgave, nay, did more, extenuated his offence, till it dwindled into nought. Incapable of harbouring resentment, she pardoned an injury before its remembrance was obliterated from her memory.

Granger, whose predictions were more than verified, began to congratulate himself. 'Twas too soon to renew his overtures. He daily witnessed the agitation of Helen, and an address so untimely might blight for ever his fair prospect. Invoking the aid of the blind deity, he relied on the effect produced by one more slow.

Seamore, as if aware of his intention, seemed to assist his design, inasmuch, as giving him the most favourable opportunities, which Granger, ever on the alert, took special care to improve.

The lover, desirous of pleasing, attends to trifles; nothing is considered by him too insignificant; nay, danger he courts, as the very test, the very standard, to prove the sincerity of his passion. Granger, though past that age, when youthful impetuosity is alleged in excuse of folly, possessed still sufficient to awaken female sensibility. The impassioned gesture, the supplicating attitude, all, all were proofs incontrovertible of love, and might have gained the heart of Helen, had not the little fugitive sought sanctuary with Alfred, as a willing captive disdaining liberty.

The importunities of Granger grew oppressive to Helen. Methinks, I hear the lovers of variety exclaim,—Old fashioned creature! what mourn for a false swain, when another so delightfully offers to supply his place; Miss Powis, Miss Carter, and many more Misses had not done so.

Of all the various pangs, with which poor mortals are afflicted, there are none, perhaps, so severe as that attendant on desertion. Our pride, our dignity, our every feeling is affected. An inadvertent word was intentionally spoken, the most remote hint was meant pointed; till, at length, we fancy something out of nothing. A being, thus exposed, may be compared to the devoted hart. Evasion is vain, for every aim wounds. Seamore was displeased with what he called, the ob-

stinate refusal of Helen; an alliance with Granger was, above all, what he most ardently wished.

Barclay, the facetious Barclay, endeavoured by his pleasantry to grace with a smile the features of his friend. Deep thought furrowed his fine features, and gave to them a serious cast. He would have exercised parental authority; but was prevented from this, by the knowledge that she had disregarded it.

How hard it is to mimic pleasure, when sighs spontaneous mingle with our very laughter! This arduous task Helen had to perform. When in the company of her fashionable acquaintance, Helen knew all eyes were on her, eager to make observations, which she was as determined should not gratify them. But had she acted her part

ever so admirably, there would not have been wanted some to say her spirits were false. Said one, in spite of the disguise, I could plainly see her heart is breaking. Another conceited, she saw what was not to be seen, a starting tear in the lovely orb of Helen; and had it been essential, ten thousand witnesses had proved she loved Alfred to distraction.—This testimony, when compared with the real state of Helen's heart, was strictly true; but their hypothesis, being supported by fiction, left a stain on their veracity, which many may call venial.

How valuable we deem the antidote, which allays the poison, prize it above all things. Thus those who felt envy, slow poison! creeping through their veins, hailed the desertion of Helen, as the antidote which promised to

counteract its effects. The very name of a wedding imparts blissful feelings to many females, it begets soft wishes; but on some, either too young, or too old, it operates quite contrary; inspires that indifference we feel about what does not concern us. That of this number were Helen's friends, I shall not pretend to say; but be that as it may, she suffered keenly from their scrutiny.

Seamore and Barclay, who suffered no diminution in their friendship, were as constantly together as heretofore. Perhaps, they were descanting on the ingratitude of Alfred; a theme so inexhaustible could hardly tire. This was only conjecture, for the subject of their cogitations was never made known.

CHAPTER VIII.

A SOMETHING like apathy rendered Helen the willing victim of every disappointment. Melancholy and desponding, she passed much of her time in retirement. Seamore, fearful for her health, would fain, by a diversity of amusement, have occupied her mind. But she obstinately refused all consolation. The destiny of Alfred excited a continual and lively interest in her bosom; and to have been assured of his welfare, had constituted her chief happiness. A trifling inci-

dent, in part, lessened her inquietude; leaving a volume she had been reading in her father's library, she went in search of it; when an open letter met her eye. 'Twas the handwriting of Barclay; with avidity she perused the contents. They related to Alfred. Barclay mentioned him in the most favourable terms, and wrote with approbation of his gratitude for the timely supply sent him by Seamore.—Heaven be praised! exclaimed she, clasping her hands with emotion; he is not the destitute cast-off being I had supposed him. My father, this kindness I will ever acknowledge. Amiable silence! that suffered me to think thus severe of him, rather than speak in his own praise. He has not forsaken Alfred; protects still the ungenerous youth, loads him with favours. His

clemency I will ever remember; yes, my father, henceforward you shall find in me, a daughter, capable of imitating your bright example. I have hitherto placed a wrong construction on your actions, viewed them through an unfavourable medium. Who knows, the austerity that has concealed the warmth of parental love, may be (like in this instance) a disguise to conceal his real feelings. If so, how have I injured him by my reserve and suspicion. Revolving in her mind the best mode of reformation, Helen prepared to meet her father with a smiling countenance. Taking no notice of the intelligence she had so clandestinely obtained, her manners were sufficiently changed to excite his notice. Her replies betrayed the pleasure of one, who is secretly delighted. Helen really was

so; and without knowing she did, by imperceptible degrees introduced the name of Alfred. If Seamore felt solicitous to know the source from whence her pleasure flowed, the wished-for information was immediately obtained. He rallied her for the anxiety she had expressed. And now was Helen conscious she had been enquiring after Alfred. Eager to explain her motive, she related the knowledge she had so improperly obtained, and entreated pardon for reading a letter addressed to him.

Seamore, confused and half angry, refused at first to gratify her curiosity, which, being only half satisfied, he with gaiety observed would be the more tormenting. 'Twas seldom that, with justice, Seamore could speak in his own praise. To resist this glorious

opportunity, he found impossible. An unguarded expression (though, by the bye, intentionally spoken,) revealed to Helen a very painful secret. Seamore was no wise offended with Alfred; not that that caused her pain; on the contrary, it had afforded her pleasure; but for the knowledge thereby imparted. She alone was the cause of his altered behaviour. Fickle and changeable, a new flame took possession of his bosom; but it existed not for Emma Arrowsmith. What language! existed not for her! Why, to speak plain, Emma had only made him her sport; nor was he presumptuous enough to think otherwise. Who then had captivated him? A nymph more lovely, more humble than the daughter of a peer.—To gain the beauteous Sophia, some degree of attention, 'tis necessary

to relate an interesting adventure, or, at least, one Alfred considered interesting. It has already been said, that he was the constant companion of young Arrowsmith. During the shooting season, Alfred received an invitation to Harley Park, the seat of Lord Arrowsmith. Being what is termed a good shot, the sport afforded him much pleasure. 'Twas after performing wonderful feats, in which success more than judgment was most predominant, that Alfred and Henry agreed to return home. In their way thither, a sound, as if of female distress, reached them. Mordaunt, without waiting for his companion, sallied forth, and succeeded in discovering the object of his solicitude. A most beautiful girl presented herself to his view, bathed in tears; the lustre of her eyes was

dimmed, but not obscured; a habit of deep mourning gave interest to her exquisite form. The fair fugitive, in endeavouring to avoid a very spirited horse, had unfortunately fell down, and broke her arm. The unconscious rider, without knowing the mischief he had caused, rode off at a swift rate. By this time Henry came up, and assisted Alfred in supporting the fair insensible, who, from extreme pain, had fainted. With difficulty she was restored, and medical assistance being procured, conveyed to her own habitation.

As was very natural, Henry and Alfred, when they reached home, related the accident. With the most enchanting sensibility Emma wept, and almost swooned. Oh! dear, how she pitied the poor sufferer! and could

not rest till she paid her a visit. She did so on the following day; and received, what she went in quest of, the gratification of her curiosity. The narrative of Sophia, without touching her heart, produced, nevertheless, the same salutary effect; Emma became her patroness.

Sophia Arlington had, within one short month, followed to the grave the only relation Providence had left her, and this relative was an affectionate mother, endeared to Sophia, as well from her bodily sufferings, as her misfortunes, which were many and accumulated. Sophia had received an elegant and useful education, which enabled her to support herself and mother, if not with perfect ease, at least, without the assistance of others. Sophia was not haughty, but she was in-

dependent; the former she considered unbecoming her situation, but the latter she supported with the sole view of rendering that situation less irksome, than it otherwise would have been.

Sophia was exposed to many trials, trials that owed their origin to the children of indolence, who, for mere pastime, sport with the feelings of the obscure. Sophia was now an orphan; and the tear that witnessed the sad truth, often found a more rapid course from that which flowed from the taunts of the wealthy. Precarious, and fraught with danger, is that path which leads to preferment. How few there are, who reach it with safety. To snatch a child of poverty from oblivion is surely a meritorious act; 'tis one, at the same time, attended with many difficulties. First, you are ex-

posed to the observation and critiscism of those, who, incapable of generosity themselves, judge by their own standard, and accordingly pronounce your motive interested. Should you escape that imputation, another accusation is made, sufficient to lessen your benevolence; or some hint ingeniously insinuated, calculated to depreciate your merit. Perhaps, these suggestions had terrified the friends of Sophia from taking her under their protection; if so, I can only say, that proneness, which is found in mankind to condemn, instead of applaud, seems to authorize their fears, and acquits them of unkindness. But if they did not totally protect her, she was not altogether neglected; and their friendly countenance was enough to gain the hapless girl the respect of those, who think

great friends (as they are called) a matter of no small importance. Sophia was consequently treated with much consideration; more so, than if she had been an humble companion.—Oh! state more terrible than slavery! for there, at least, the freedom of thought may be enjoyed. Like the bound victim, who cannot fly from his persecutors, so are those unfortunates. Some dissenting remark, some unlucky difference of opinion, stamps your fate irrevocably. Who are your enemies? Those whom a similar destiny ought to teach lenity. Your mistress, and their mistress, is informed; dismissal is the result; and the accuser with triumph exults, because one, whom a mere trifle rendered obnoxious, is cast on the wide world, deprived of the only means whereby you and they can earn a sub-

sistence. Let the rich plead in excuse of their severity to the poor, their ignorance of the hardships they endure, their plea shall, and must be allowed, if those who have witnessed their sufferings, can, for a slight pique, prove unmindful of them. Cruelty is not confined to any particular station, or sphere—'tis a fault of which the whole world, in some measure, partake.

The first visit of Emma was then paid to a girl, beloved and esteemed by all who knew her; an orphan, fully sensible of her defenceless state, yet possessed of that true piety which taught her not to repine at that state. Emma contemplated a being, whose disposition, unsoured by adversity, was placidly serene, not the broken spirit of abject depression, but that, so peculiarly attracting, which nature alone

can bestow. An unwilling captive, she yielded; I say unwilling, for Emma was not wont to treat with civility a poor dependent, but so it happened, the good genii of Sophia prevailed, and, on the return to town of the Arrowsmith family, she, at the particular request of Emma, removed also to the metropolis.

How sweet the accent of gratitude; with unusual pathos each word falls from the lips of beauty, and, like a dangerous malady, insinuates through the whole frame. A sensation like this agitated the bosom of Alfred, when the fascinating Sophia acknowledged the obligation she owed him;—he stammered, hesitated, glowed, and looked all but what he felt; his reply was less elaborate than he had wished; more might have been said. Sophia

must think him very deficient, or worse, think him insufferably vain, for, by the little he said, it appeared as if he thought the thanks she expressed no more than his due. How ridiculous, you self-tormentor! perhaps, were the truth known, Sophia was not even thinking about you.—Be that as it may, raillery was now in high requisition; Alfred was incessantly tormented by Hamilton about the fair recluse, as he was pleased to call Sophia. The first step toward promoting love, is to persuade a person you think they are already inspired by that passion; this kind of predisposal has often directed many to their future haven. That Alfred was thereby influenced I shall not pretend to say, but leave the sequel for time to explain.

Now, it frequently occurs, from the

ambiguity which love, tenacious of exposure, delights in, that we name one thing when we mean another; Hamilton thought Helen, though he named Emma, meant all the while Sophia. The concluding remark he made, which was spoken without meaning, was now discovered to possess one. Yes, Walter said, the further Alfred proceeded he should leave him behind on the road. This bore a striking analogy to Sophia Arlington—she perfectly comprehended its ironical import. Oh, ye industrious architects, with what facility you raze and rebuild the same structure.

Helen had proof sufficient to make her miserable—Alfred loved another! she had placed confidence in an unworthy object; and she called to mind the words of her father. Oh, had I

but listened, exclaimed she, overcome with emotion, and sunk almost insensible on a chair.

Hatred could not so soon succeed love, and scarce a colder sentiment existed in her bosom than reproach. In acquitting Alfred, she had only to lament the perverseness of her destiny, and to mourn, that infidelity, which had worked no change in her. Seamore observed the agony of her feelings; for Helen, completely subdued, yielded to that tenderness his conduct inspired. Guided by impulse, she appreciated an action by the effect it produced in her own generous bosom, and gave him credit for more than he deserved. To atone for her past misconduct no means were left unattempted.

CHAPTER IX.

THE altered behaviour of Helen was not unheeded by Seamore, and from it he drew the most favorable conclusions; if the change pleased him, with not less satisfaction was it beheld by Granger. Helen, convinced of his infidelity, strove to forget Alfred, and really fancied she had, till a sight of him revealed the contrary, but then she attempted to mistake the emotions of her bosom—'twas indignation alone that agitated her; thus, while she persuaded herself she was banishing love,

it was still secretly cherished, though under a feigned name. Had she needed further testimony to prove that Emma was not the object of Alfred's choice, it had been obtained from the hints of her friends, and the intimation given by the daily prints. Both the lovely daughters of Lord Arrowsmith were speedily to be led to the Hymeneal altar. Curiosity was on the wing, and the heart of Helen fluttered; Emma, romantic and inconsiderate, hardly knew what she did; that she was romantic was true, but Emma Arrowsmith had never stooped so low as to bestow her hand on an obscure plebeian. Yet the fault of Helen was venial, she had only judged another by herself. The lovely Emma was shortly to become Lady Maxwell, and her sister Countess of Glenmore. The

wishes of their fond, but weak mother, were now completely gratified; in the marriage of her daughters, pride and vanity claimed an equal share. With less restraint she could raise to her lips the intoxicating draught of pleasure. Lord Arrowsmith, who perceived her delight, and even guessed at its source, attempted not to remonstrate; vain and useless all that he could urge; her Ladyship had disregarded eloquence itself. Seamore, who beheld with triumph his conquest, suffered it not to appear, but, like the wary besieger, watched for the favorable moment. Helen had affected to forget Alfred—he would try the truth of her profession, and plead for Granger, in as delicate a manner as possible.

Though he met with no direct re-

pulse, he was far from gaining the attention he wished. Helen did not refuse, yet conducted herself with an evasion that disconcerted him. With this fresh disappointment Barclay was made acquainted, but the communication seemed not to interest him; it was evident their friendship was on the wane, nay, some did not scruple to say a kind of variance existed between the once dear friends, and that the entertainments of Seamore were not graced with the presence of Barclay. More remarks had been made on their visible coolness, but for the important subject that gave interest to the chit-chat of the day. The dress of the fair brides first engaged, next, the fortune of the intended bridegrooms, with the interest of relations; each discussed the matter, one pronouncing the

alliance equal, while another attempted to prove the fortune of Lord Maxwell was in nowise equal to that possessed by Emma. The gentlemen resolved not to yield the point, afforded the ladies an opportunity to wonder who and who would be invited. Some that were doubtful of receiving an invitation, declared they did not think of going, thereby leaving room to take back their word, should occasion offer. I should like to know, said the Hon. Miss Hargrave, who will be bridesmaid? now this was an honor for which she sighed, but when the happy day arrived, she, and many others, found themselves disappointed.

Sophia Arlington, whom it was thought would share largely the bounty of her patroness, to the surprise of every body, received a dismissal, and

had been totally unprovided for, were it not that Lady Arrowsmith, conscious of her influence over Seamore, begged him to let the poor thing attend Helen ; in consequence of which, and to shew her ladyship how implicitly he obeyed her commands, Mrs. Wright was discharged. The loss of her attendant was far from displeasing to Helen, but she felt a something like repugnance on hearing Sophia was to supply her place. Will not Alfred feel humiliated, thought the generous girl ; and she determined, since she had no alternative, to lessen, as much as possible, the services of Sophia. Had jealousy, had every discordant passion agitated the bosom of Helen, they had all vanished at the approach of the interesting orphan ; her gentle and unassuming manners, by powerful attrac-

tion, made way to the heart, entered each avenue, and returned warm with the generous sentiments they had excited.

The voice of Helen was unusually soft, its pathos gave to her commands the appearance of a request, and penetrated the grateful Sophia, who drew a comparison between Emma and Seamore's lovely daughter. But her remarks were mentally made; flattery she despised, considering it language that debased the utterer, and insulted the understanding of those to whom it was addressed.

A very short period revealed another secret to Helen—Alfred was not, nor ever had been in love with Sophia; he had done no more for her than he had performed for any other female, in a similar situation. If Emma Arrow-

smith, like an amateur, had fell in love with the picture of benevolence, without knowing the original, was he to be accountable for that? 'Twas impossible to see Sophia and not allow she possessed merit—imputing to Alfred a large share of discernment, it was thought he could not long remain insensible to her perfections. What, then, could prevent the match? the family of Sophia. Poh! said one, who thereby had an opportunity of reviving Alfred's obscurity, he is not so great himself—Seamore protects him; and she has the advantage, her patroness is a lord's daughter.

All reasonable objections being removed, matters were planned, discussed, and arranged, without so much as consulting either party: but time, who defeats projects and projectors, disap-

pointed them; vexed, to find themselves mistaken, the report was traced to its origin, and Walter Hamilton proved the author. This gave room to conjecture; perhaps he had imputed to Alfred what more properly belonged to himself; thus, in a very short space, Sophia was supplied with two lovers—neither of whom were really such; for Walter, as if to plague these meddlesome beings, married a Miss Rancliffe, a lady of fishing notoriety. The fair angler was allowed to possess some share of beauty, a large portion of wit, and a still more desirable fortune. But there was yet one unmarried in the family where Sophia resided—how was it possible they could overlook him? but, as is too often the case, the most guilty are thought the most innocent.

'Twas now recollected Henry Ar-

rowsmith was the companion of Alfred. On their first meeting with Sophia his heart alone had been conquered, but blushing to acknowledge the ignoble flame, and fearful of his father's displeasure, Mordaunt appeared as her lover. Some affected to pity Lord Arrowsmith, and attempted to describe what his feelings would be on the humiliating discovery.

The object of their friendly solicitude was attacked with an alarming illness, which terminated his life, and prevented him (they had almost said) from witnessing his son's disgrace.

Henry, now Lord Arrowsmith, with true filial sorrow, followed to the grave his beloved and lamented sire. The active benevolence of the deceased wrung the tear of regret from every eye—the gay, suspended for a mo-

ment, their mirth; the grave heaved a sigh, and all joined in deploring his loss. The afflicted dowager yielded herself a prey to the most violent grief. As weak minds are easily subdued, her's became sunk so low, that it refused all consolation—nothing possessed charm sufficient to draw off her attention from the object for whom she incessantly mourned, not even the endearing society of her daughters. Attached alone to pleasure, Lady Arrowsmith hardly thought of pain, much less felt it; unprepared for the attack, it came with additional force. The marriage of her son once more attracted the dowager to the fashionable world. Her Ladyship, like one who has been absent from dear friends, embraced each with more than usual kindness; she was too well pleased with the reunion, to think again

of parting; but now she had a new source of amusement—the disposition of her daughter-in-law, the Hon. Miss Mortimer, was uncommonly gentle; to model and to dictate to this amiable creature so fully employed her, that she forgot the death of her husband, whom she sincerely loved.

None beheld the felicity of Lord Arrowsmith with greater pleasure than did Alfred; unhappy himself, he, nevertheless, participated the happiness of his friend, for as such it was his supreme delight to consider Henry. Indebted to the departed peer for the notice with which he was distinguished, it may be supposed Alfred lamented his death; he did, and with unfeigned sincerity.

Lord Arrowsmith did credit to the recommendation of his father; he found

in Mordaunt, what is rarely met with, a mind unvitiated, one, possessed of that independence, which neither loss or gain could influence.

Poor Sophia was now completely forsaken; all her reputed lovers were married. On the very verge of despair, the delusive voice of hope whispered consolation; Granger might yield to the force of her charms. Flattered by the encouragement of Seamore, Granger had once more addressed Helen, but with no better success; painfully convinced that her determination was unalterable, he resolved to disturb her peace no more, and by this conduct obtained and enjoyed her friendship.

Helen, with a pleasure that none but one equally exalted could feel, heard that Alfred was continually with

Lord Arrowsmith. Incapable of hating the being she had once loved, his welfare was still dear to her; nor had her tenderness in the least abated. A soft serene melancholy happily succeeded that violent grief which marks a sudden shock. The infidelity of Alfred, while it annihilated every hope, robbed her of all fortitude, and, like the mighty depredator, plundered the unresisting victim of every thing. From the society of Sophia she derived much satisfaction, perhaps, because the only being to whom she could talk of Mordaunt; never tired of hearing, neither was the other weary of repeating that just praise which she considered due to Alfred. To him she owed the patronage of Emma; humility teaching her to impute to another that, for which she was solely indebted to her own me-

rit. Helen listened with pleasure to the fair encomiast, mentally exclaiming—Such, and so amiable, I once thought Alfred !—Recollection forced from her lovely eyes the pearly drop of regret, and the heaving of her bosom betrayed the emotion she was unable to conceal.

Seamore, in the language of philosophy, pronounced all sublunary joys but mere trifles. Care sat heavy on his brow, and he felt a void he fain would have filled, but 'twas impossible. His bosom laboured with secret sorrow; what could occasion this change? some people said, Barclay and Seamore had a serious misunderstanding, and that the former accused the latter with something, at which he turned of an ashy paleness. Another declared he had seen Seamore forcibly strike his

cane against the brass heel of his boot; this act indicated vexation, doubtless occasioned by the menace of Barclay. Untrue, untrue, cried the whole fashionable world; for sooner had a sceptic been taught to believe, than they to credit the report now in circulation. It spoke of the two friends, from some unaccountable cause, converted into bitter enemies, and strange to tell, the report was true. The honor, the integrity of Barclay was at stake, for five thousand pounds! nay, all this is dear to a man possessed of his sensitive feelings. This he imparted to Seamore, who, notwithstanding the long duration of their friendship, the uncommon intimacy which subsisted, had the cruelty to refuse so small a sum; and Barclay vowed vengeance because he would not add one more to the many many favours already conferred.

As is the case, some gave Seamore right, and others granted to Barclay equal justice; but this was not altogether to be obtained, for Barclay, with a significant look, said they did not know half; and Seamore insinuated he could tell a vast deal. These inuendos gave an edge to the keen appetite of curiosity; all was impatience, when the two, like pugilistic heroes, after a little sparring, indulged the eager multitude with a set to. One accused, the other denied, then retorted, then recriminated, and all was heard but recantation.

CHAPTER X.

BARCLAY, had been for years, the intimate friend of Mr. Mordaunt, a man of considerable property, and the first husband of Mrs. Seamore. Mr. Mordaunt had an only sister, of whom he was doatingly fond; not less fond was Mrs. Rivers of her sister-in-law; and during the occasional absence of her husband, (Admiral Rivers,) she constantly resided with her brother.

A similitude of sentiments, united with the happy group in the bonds of harmony; no jarring disputes disturb-

ed their tranquillity, all was concord and peace.

How frequent an event to which we look forward with pleasure, becomes the source of our misery. Scarce was Mrs. Mordaunt a mother, when she became a widow; her amiable husband was snatched suddenly, by the fell hand of death, and left her distracted, and broken-hearted. A stroke so dire, so little expected, deprived her of all fortitude; from the height of human bliss, she was in one moment, plunged into the lowest abyss of despair; and the more so, as the tender consolation of Mrs. Rivers was witheld. Unfortunately that lady's accouchment, happened at the same period, and she could only at a distance, sympathize with her misfortune, while her own sorrow for a brother so be-

loved, rivalled all description.—The rude shock deprived Mrs. Mordaunt of reason; unable to fulfil the soft maternal duties, Mrs. Rivers supplied her place, and administered to the infantile wants of the little Edgar; her attention became divided between him, and her own Lionel, and together she nurtured the infant cousins.

Mr. Mordaunt the day before his death, (of which he felt a kind of presentiment) made his will, appointing his friend Barclay sole executor, and guardian to his son, to whom, and the heirs of his sister, he bequeathed the whole of his fortune: for the father of Mrs. Mordaunt, before marriage, had, agreeable to the request of Mordaunt, settled her fortune on herself; therefore, any addition was superfluous. His worldly affairs being settled, Mr.

Mordaunt found himself more at ease, and prepared with serenity, for the dissolution he hourly expected, and which speedily took place.

His enanguished wife, incapable of exerting fortitude, left the whole management to the care of Barclay, who, much distressed at the moving scene, made to his dying friend, the most solemn assurances of protecting his son. Satisfied with his faithful promise, life departed, and Mordaunt ceased to be!—the sorrow of Mrs. Mordaunt, admitted of no alleviation, and to the solitude of grief, the mourner retired. She had loved her husband with the liveliest affection, he was snatched from her so sudden, that the whole appeared like a dream. She could not credit the evidence of her senses, and so fatally poignant were her feelings,

that the most dreadful insensibility ensued.

The assiduous attention of her friends, but more particularly Barclay, removed from her mind every other care; the funeral was conducted with becoming silence and solemnity; but vain this delicate attention—the ill fated mourner, sunk into a state of deathlike stupor, which rendered her unmindful of every object.

As soon as her situation would permit, Mrs. Rivers came in person to console her hapless sister-in-law; but she knew her not, and gazed with unmeaning expression at the infant Edgar; the soft pleadings of maternal love, could not warm her lorn chilled bosom.

Thus sadly rolled months,—the Admiral taking an affectionate leave of

his wife, and infant heir, consigned them to the care of providence, and attended the call of duty.

The alarming condition of Mrs. Mordaunt, promised no amendment, and filled her friends with despair; in vain they presented her child to awaken recollection—sensibility seemed fled. Straining the neglected little being to her throbbing bosom, Mrs. Rivers vowed to be its mother; tears of sympathy bedewed the unconscious infant's face, and her full heart found sweet relief, by the free indulgence of her sorrow.

Energy, and every tender sentiment combined, enabled her to exercise fortitude, which, soon however, received a fatal shock; with one soft struggle, Lionel expired.

The virtuous mind never totally yields to despair. The returning reason of Mrs. Mordaunt lessened the pangs occasioned by Lionel's death; and a something like serenity began to be restored, when fate, winged with arrows, took aim at the bosom of Mrs. Rivers. The brave and gallant admiral, covered with glorious wounds, fell in his country's cause; the news, too suddenly and incautiously imparted, spared the amiable Mrs. Rivers another pang. Heaven, in pity, took that exalted woman, and bestowed on her, what she had conferred on many, rest; but she was to receive greater reward, rest eternal!

Mrs. Mordaunt in time grew resigned, and lavished on Edgar all the impassioned fondness of a mother. She, nevertheless, felt more than she ex-

pressed, and purely to dissipate the solicitude of her friends, assumed a cheerfulness foreign to her heart.

Among the first to congratulate her on her restoration to tranquillity was Mr. Barclay. The excessive delicacy his conduct on every occasion evinced, made on her an impression that obtained for him her warmest respect. But Barclay wished to inspire a sentiment still warmer, and redoubled his assiduities to please. No recommendatory art was left untried; for Barclay, complete master of her affairs, without betraying any mercenary motive, was informed of all he wished to know. He, therefore, as soon as opportunity and decorum would permit, revealed his disinterested attachment; but retired with confusion, being silenced by her prudent and delicate objections.

His premature and impolitic declaration had nearly lost him her esteem; but with infinite address he excused himself; or, perhaps, the fair object of his ardent passion was not invulnerable to flattery, and readily pardoned an offence, of which herself was the cause.

One year had elapsed, when Barclay renewed those overtures that had been so coldly received; but ill success again attended him. With less frigidity, though with equal indifference, the beautiful widow heard his vehement protestations of unalterable love. Notwithstanding which, the persevering lover was not devoid of hope. She had not bid him absolutely despair, and he made an allowance for female prudery. Things were in a fair and promising train, when, lo! the disap-

pointed swain beheld a rival, in the person of Mr. Seamore. For once the rumour of report was true, and those whisperings not without foundation, that had spoke of Barclay as the former suitor of the deceased Mrs. Seamore. That many should discredit this assertion was no more than probable; for few, unless gifted with Barclay's hypocrisy, could have acted in like manner.

An intimacy was formed, in a very short time, between the rivals; and Barclay, with much prudence, but unlike the ardent lover he professed himself to be, quietly resigned his pretensions, wisely concluding more might be gained from a friend than an enemy. A pretended admirer of Seamore's sentiments, he begged that the interposition of his wishes (now that

they were without hope) might not deprive him of his friendship.—His well-timed flattery succeeded; Barclay was still admitted on the same friendly footing by Mrs. Seamore; and even Seamore seemed never so full of spirits, as when that cheerful fellow Barclay was of the party. Though some accused him of unlover-like behaviour, and called the strength of his passion in question, nay, doubted if any ever existed; yet Barclay was reconciled to all this, by the weight of substantial reasons. Now it was that he fed the spirit of curiosity; Barclay, constantly at Brunswick Square, was the cicisbeo of Mrs. Seamore, and attended her wherever she went. The busy-bodies pryed, spinsters giggled, and all enquired how Seamore relished it. Nothing like displeasure was visible, and

the very opinion itself was considered groundless.

Barclay, for the sake of decorum, thought fit, when alone with Mrs. Seamore, to look occasionally woe-begone, and, ever and anon, heaved a sigh; besides he was not present on the nuptial day, confessing some time after, with a forced smile, the sight was too much for him. Your charms must have been inferior to what they are, said he, with stifled emotion; and casting an expressive look at Mrs. Seamore, could I have witnessed unmoved the trying sight? I am not a stoic, so do not expect I shall act like one.

This piece of gallantry produced the desired effect; it increased the small interest he once had in the bosom of Mrs. Seamore; and on discovering the unworthiness of her husband, she al-

most wished she had chosen Barclay. The only reparation she now could make him, was by the continuance of her friendship, with which he was honored till the hour of her death.

In time, Seamore grew jealous of his influence, and hinted his displeasure; but had the mortification to find her resolution fixed, and Barclay the constant and invited guest, who, by his pleasantry made even musing melancholy smile.

The ill health of Mrs. Seamore, and the constant importunity of her husband, induced her to let Edgar remain in the country, under the care of a Mrs. Mordaunt, a very distant relation of her first husband. This Lady led a secluded life; and, consequently, devoted much of her time to the child, on whom she actually doat-

ed. That Edgar was an object of aversion to Seamore, every action of his toward the child plainly showed; and this conviction it was, that filled her maternal bosom with a thousand fears. Whenever she expressed a wish to behold her boy, the coldest indifference marked his answer, and altogether her request was refused. This cruel deprivation preyed on her spirits; and while she beheld with pain his brutal conduct, she secretly rejoiced that his fortune was secured beyond the reach of his father, and would procure him those comforts denied to his infant state.

Deceived in the man, on whom she had bestowed her hand, as his character developed itself, love was succeeded by contempt, and she felt those sensations of disgust, which her amia-

ble disposition induced her to conceal. The friendship of Barclay was her only resource, and with him she mourned the destination of her hand. The flattering assurance, that for her sake, he would continue a bachelor, was at first disregarded; but when the constancy of years proved the truth of his assertion, she thought him entitled, nay, granted all that gratitude could bestow; for never once did she guess the real cause—perhaps vanity prevented her. Barclay had not seen one so rich, and his foresight pointed out to him the advantage of paying court to a married woman, who had so much in her power, or, rather, who suffered so much to remain in his.

CHAPTER XI.

THE birth of a daughter for awhile expanded her maternal bosom. Seamore will at least, thought she, show kindness to his own child, if he hates and neglects my poor Edgar. But Seamore was insensible to the warm, parental glow, and coldly received the little stranger.

To the attentive ear of Barclay, Mrs. Seamore poured forth her pathetic complaints. This sympathizing friend offered her all imaginable consolation, at the same time, artfully discovering

the leading traits of her husband's character; avarice he represented as the most striking feature, and this discovery proved a new source of anguish to the unfortunate Mrs. Seamore. Convinced of its reality, she lamented with the bitterest self-reproach the confidence she had placed in a being, so unworthy of her regard. Solaced by the idea that in Barclay the child would find a guardian and father, her mind gained composure. Thankful for the timely hint of Barclay, she was prevented from reposing a confidence, that she now determined should be wholly confined to himself; it was relative to the welfare of her darling Edgar.

Seamore, unmoved by entreaty or solicitation, still continued obdurate; and refused her frequent petitions for

the return of Edgar, till her rapidly declining health made it almost a dying request. The sight of the child, improved in bloom and stature, operated so powerfully on the feelings of his mother, that she seemed to regain new life, and contrary to the expectations, I will not say, wishes, of her husband, she recovered.—But, alas! her recovery proved only imperfect; the sudden transition of joy brought on a relapse, and lenient death terminated her mortal sufferings.

Barclay, assuming the semblance of sorrow, offered condolence to a mourner, whose grief was as fictitious as his own. But soon these congenial beings let fall the flimsy veil they had worn to deceive the prying world, and as nothing could be done without Barclay, Seamore received him most cordially.

After a very short period, dedicated to funeral rites and those of decorum, an *eclaircissement* took place; after which, Seamore contented himself, if he could not act alone, that they could act in concert; and at the next meeting, he opened his mind to Barclay. None of his friends knew any thing concerning the real parentage of Edgar; from his aversion to the child, and his continual absence from home, he had been scarcely seen; so that whatever story they chose to circulate must gain credit, because none could contradict it. But what this tale should be, exercised their ingenuity; none seemed so plausible as the one that was immediately propagated, describing Edgar as the orphan son of Mrs. Mordaunt, left unprovided for by her death, which actually happen-

ed three weeks after the removal of Edgar to the house of Seamore, by the request of his then dying wife.

This event spared Barclay and his friend any further trouble; and young Mordaunt (by them so called) became a constant inmate of Seamore's town residence. Every thing succeeded to their utmost wishes; Helen, and Edgar (to whom they gave the name of Alfred) were consigned to the care of servants; while the two friends, living on the most amicable system of brotherly love, shared in all the amusements of the day.

Seamore meritoriously withstood the meddlesome persuasions of his friends, who urged him to deal less liberal with Alfred. Oh! ye, who feel generous emulation at the performance of an act, the motive of which you are unac-

quainted with, how had your approbation been converted into detestation, if the real delinquency of Seamore had been revealed!

The voice of curiosity was continually exclaiming, Who can he be? And to satisfy this inquisitive question, surmise whispered, Alfred was the natural son of Seamore; and the idea was generally credited.

Dissipation, in some measure, banished from the memory of Barclay, the chief and principal inducement, which had tempted him to violate a trust reposed in him, and wrong an innocent orphan. Self-interest was forgotten. Not so with Seamore; the frequent and increased demands of Barclay alarmed him. He ventured to remonstrate, and reminded him of the immense sums already advanced. Perhaps, this

friendly hint was only given with the laudable view of checking his extravagance. Whether that was his intention, or no, Barclay chose to consider it as such; and protesting his memory was fallacious in the extreme, begged his good friend would keep an exact account of all the little disbursements; for, said he, I keep no check myself, I place implicit confidence in you. Careless and negligent as before, he pursued the path of pleasure much to the disquiet of Seamore, who wished for nothing more ardently than he did for a settlement. This Barclay as earnestly avoided; till, at length, Seamore, wearied by his obstinate refusal, gave a sudden check to his high career, by acquainting him the whole of the promised sum had been advanced. —How now? exclaimed Barclay; an

agreement is an agreement; and ransacking his bad memory, he reckoned to a single fraction, that he had received but one-fourth of Alfred's fortune, whereas it was to have been divided, share and share alike.

Seamore, somewhat disconcerted by his positive manner, however still persisted he was right, and Barclay as staunchly persisted he was wrong; till the former replied, What dependence can be placed on your memory, when yourself has confessed it cannot be relied on from one moment to the other? But Barclay convinced him, if his memory was not to be relied on, his tongue was equally so; for taking from his pocket a paper, he produced every item, black upon white. The faith of Seamore seemed staggered, and for a moment he yielded to surprise; but as

quickly recovering himself, he substantiated his charge with the boldest effrontery. Barclay, finding nothing was to be obtained by coercion, began to remonstrate, but with equal success. His policy, however, did not forsake him; and disguising his feelings, he exclaimed, Faith! I cannot forbear laughing to see you and me so earnestly contending about a little pelf, of no consideration. We are both men of spirit, and have lost more on a favourite horse; perhaps, it is my mistake. I am not a book-keeper, or accomptant; and even those gentlemen of entry are not infallible; so why should I suppose I am? Seamore, our conversation grows spiritless; let's have a bottle of wine.

Thus were matters adjusted, so much to the satisfaction of Seamore, that he

presented Barclay with an additional five hundred more, as he said, than the promised sum. Still, however, he was dissatisfied; he approved not of the constant company of Barclay, yet feared to betray his displeasure, lest the other should consider it in its true light, that he wished to break off all connexion with him. Seamore, whose disposition was not quite so accommodating as that of Barclay, evinced his disgust in a thousand different ways, sufficiently expressive to excite the notice of Barclay. But his wisdom far excelled Seamore's; and had but his mental powers been laudably employed, they would have reflected on him honor instead of disgrace. Lending an inattentive ear to the oblique but pointed hints of Seamore, he still considered his house as the home that had

been proffered him, on the first commencement of their friendship; still saw, or affected to see, the welcome of his friend.

Soon the assizes granted to Seamore the release that subterfuge could not obtain; a most important suit demanded the presence of Barclay; and with mutual expressions of regret at the unexpected interruption, these dear friends separated; Barclay inwardly smiling at the deception of Seamore, and he, congratulating himself that he had acted with so much caution, little suspecting the real knowledge of Barclay.—And thus a friendship, that was only to terminate with their existence, dwindled into the mere intimacy of fashionable friends.

Barclay, when in a vein of extreme good-humour, would come and tanta-

lize Seamore. Affecting the morality he scoffed at, he would speak of Alfred with apparent compunction, and fill his mind with horror unspeakable. Nothing he dreaded so much as a discovery, which, from the seeming contrition of Barclay, he continually feared. He frequently surprised him casting on Alfred looks of the utmost compassion; and though he, at times, consoled himself with the reflection that a disclosure would equally involve Barclay, and cast an odium on his professional character, which stood high in the eyes of the world, yet little reliance was to be placed on him, should he yield to remorse. In the meanwhile, Barclay enjoyed the terror he had excited, which poor Seamore, not sufficient master of his feelings, was unable to disguise; and had he requir-

ed any other confirmation, it was obtained from the overtures of Seamore, who, unable any longer to conceal his apprehensions, made him a most liberal offer, if he would re-swear to preserve inviolable the secret with which he was intrusted. Barclay readily took the oath, but refused the bribe. If fear had given birth to surmise, surmise now became, by his refusal, a confirmed truth; he meant to betray him, but took the oath to deceive.

Barclay saw his triumph; 'twas now he rejoiced at the sensations he had excited; sensations acute indeed, since they had subdued avarice, and urged Seamore to make an offer his parsimony had formerly refused, though his promise and oath had been pledged for its performance. Suspicion, with all its torment, now assailed him, and

his peace of mind was completely disturbed.—Oh! guilt, who would follow thee, thou source of abasement! How humbled felt the haughty Seamore, even before the accomplice of his guilt! How mighty seemed the war of contending passions, that raged within his bosom! how restrained felt his tongue, when by fear compelled to repress those reproaches his indignation taught him to vent. But he durst not; and this conviction it was that inflicted a keener pang than even detection. Who that were acquainted with his feelings, would have added a whit to that punishment, which was the more severe because self-inflicted? Incessantly tormented, he knew no interval of rest, and was compelled per force to satisfy the rapacious demands of Barclay.—Strongly addicted to gaming, as has

been heretofore mentioned, his losses were frequent and heavy, all of which Seamore felt severely; and in the end, found his purse, as well as his patience, nearly exhausted. To hope for a reformation in this prodigal was vain; he grew incorrigible, and with the utmost boldness threatened his colleague. 'Twas now that Seamore felt truly his dependent state; at the caprice and mercy of one he detested, his life became a burthen; vindictive and cruel, he thirsted for revenge.

In this frame of mind, his acquaintance with Captain O'Hara first commenced; and the sequel proved, that one villain had become the dupe of the other. If once freed from Alfred, he had bid defiance to Barclay, and laughed at his menaces.

CHAPTER XII.

THE strange appearance, which had excited such wonderful commotion in the fashionable world, owed its origin to the serious fracas Barclay had at cards with Dame Fortune. A complete bankrupt, his only resource was a mortgage on his paternal estate in Shropshire. Thus were his sagacious friends, who guessed as much, in no wise mistaken.

Seamore, almost distracted by the disappointment of O'Hara, yielded a compulsatory acquiescence with the

wishes of Barclay, and placed Alfred under his care.—Removed from Helen, he hoped that time and absence would work the change he so ardently desired. This not proving the case, he was again drove to the last extremity. He lamented following the advice of Barclay; for by so doing, he could never get rid of Alfred. But it was not the intention of Barclay that he should; for this he so strenuously opposed the proposal of O'Hara. The life of a sailor was doubtful; he should then lose all claim on Seamore, who once more besought his assistance.

The passion of Alfred every day gained additional strength,—What can I do? demanded Seamore. As desperate diseases require desperate remedies, he resolved on applying one to cure the wound of Alfred—he was in-

formed Helen was his sister! Grief, horror, and amazement, nearly overpowered the distracted youth; his bosom throbbed, his head ached, and an icy chillness crept about his heart. For a moment recollection forsook him; but soon awake to keener sensation, he began to question the truth of the assertion. Seamore related the particulars, though not without some necessary reservation. Alfred, pleased to find he was not his father, was nevertheless fatally convinced Helen was his sister. Agony, like that which he felt, may be imagined, but it can never be described; his state was worse than madness, for there a deprivation of sense spares the poor sufferer keener pangs; thought crowded on thought, and left the unfortunate Alfred forlorn indeed.

Seamore bound him by a solemn oath, not to reveal to Helen the fatal discovery. But the injunction was unnecessary; rather than wound her bosom with such a tale, Alfred had bore if possible, severer trials, had suffered even greater torment. The more he reflected, the more he became enanguished. Hence his altered manner, which so sensibly affected Helen.

Seamore, far from feeling the least compunction, hailed in the sufferings of Alfred the completion of his wishes. Unable to support the sight of Helen, Alfred avoided her; and when by chance they accidentally met, behaved with so much confusion that excited her surprise. Not more mortified than she was astonished, the letter of Barclay, purposely left in the library, met her eye. Moved by the contents

her sentiments underwent a change highly favourable to the perfidious Seamore. Alfred was enamoured with Sophia Arlington, at least so he believed. Struggling with wounded pride and unrequited love, she wished her father to think the memory of Alfred was consigned to oblivion. He did so, and became the advocate of Granger. Painfully undeceived, he found Helen had boasted of what she could not perform. A prey to continual anxiety, his mind was a perfect chaos, and peace forsook his bosom; an abject slave to the caprice of Barclay, he more than ever felt the yoke insupportable.

His guilty career was soon now to find a termination; striking proof, that no dependence can be placed on the friendship of the vicious. The breach

between him and Barclay was irreparable; but the consequence which attended it was far more dreadful; shame, disgrace, and ruin, was in the idea. What—relinquish luxury, for which he had sacrificed so much! what would his gay companions say? This consideration deservedly increased his pain; but those high-prized, gay companions, when acquainted with the change that had taken place, looked a sweet farewell as they passed the house in Brunswick Square, ridiculed its late inhabitant, and thought no more about him.

Barclay, finding nothing more could be obtained, entirely changed his manner; and much to the astonishment of Seamore, assumed the consequence of one possessed of an important secret. His demands increased in exorbitance,

as if his aim was to prevent their being complied with; and like a skilful general, he carefully guarded against all possible means of escape. Seamore observed his conduct with the utmost anxiety,—what could influence it?—Tormented by doubt and fear, he awaited the result in the most terrible suspence.

Barclay, determined to delay the intended discovery no longer, revealed what astonished, overwhelmed, and confounded Seamore. It has been stated, that during the fatal insensibility of Mrs. Mordaunt, Lionel died; but that was not the case, though so reported by Barclay, and innocently corroborated by Mrs. Rivers. At the death of Edgar, the amiable Mrs. Rivers, by her own judged what would be the feelings of his widowed

mother. This is an additional misfortune, exclaimed that compassionate being—Softly! replied the insidious Barclay, whose ever watchful eye saw in the death of Edgar the diminution of his power. No longer his guardian, his influence over Mrs. Mordaunt would decrease, and dash at once those hopes, with which he had buoyed himself.—Let us, if possible, he continued, spare the afflicted Mrs. Mordaunt another pang.—Even the very suggestion whispered peace to Mrs. Rivers, and she eagerly enquired what he meant. He then explained himself: 'Tis easy done, said he; report the child that died was your own. Should the senses of Mrs. Mordaunt be restored, 'tis then time enough to undeceive her, when she has gained strength of mind to bear the intelligence; but if revealed

in her present disordered state, what dreadful consequences may not be apprehended? And should you even continue the deception some time longer, I see no evil that can result therefrom, unless you have another child; for by the will of Mr. Mordaunt, his son's property, at his death, devolves to your children, which constitutes either Edgar, or Lionel, heir to the other; by the death of the former, the latter is sole heir.

Mrs. Rivers acquiesced, and thanked Barclay for the deception. When Mrs. Mordaunt, restored to reason, clasped the babe in her arms, blessing those who had preserved to her the treasure,—There, said the exultant Barclay, are you not happy you followed my advice?—Tears of gratitude were his only answer, for Mrs. Rivers

was unable to speak.—Lionel, now called Edgar, was considered by Mrs. Mordaunt as her own child; while for the supposed death of her nephew, she let fall the tears of regret. The smile of serenity once more illumined her expressive countenance; but, alas! it quickly receded at the approach of calamity. At this epoch, the death of Admiral Rivers took place; fatal in its consequence, it occasioned that of Mrs. Rivers. She died without revealing that the supposed Edgar was her son; —fortunate concealment for Barclay. However, he had hoped, by a long train of artifice, to preserve the secret had she even lived; but now he was relieved from all care; he would still continue guardian to the fictitious Edgar, and, consequently, have the disposal of his fortune.—In time, he

hoped to reap the benefit of his deep-laid scheme; but the refusal of Mrs. Mordaunt completely disappointed him. When she became the wife of Seamore, 'twas then he congratulated himself on his silence. Possessed of address sufficient to conciliate Seamore, he enjoyed his friendship, and retained that of Mrs. Seamore. The constant residence of Lionel, in the country, suited well his purpose; with Mrs. Mordaunt he remained unknown, and at the death of Mrs. Seamore, passed for that lady's son. She shortly closed her mortal career, and removed from the confederates all fear of detection.

The wily Barclay, conscious of possessing a secret that completely placed Seamore in his power, behaved in the manner already described; with the hopes of distant revenge he solaced

himself, and bore patiently with Seamore, who had forfeited his word in the fair division of Lionel's fortune. —Affecting to be the prey of remorse, he made a kind of silent accusation, that filled his colleague with the most painful anxiety. In the growing attachment of Helen and Lionel, he joyfully saw the completion of his wishes. The anguish of Seamore became thereby increased; his nature revolted at what he thought their unnatural love; and with this aggravation of his crime, Barclay frequently taunted.

Thus did the sufferings of Seamore far exceed those that punishment had inflicted; for while the former admitted of no alleviation, the latter had by a speedy termination put an end to that disquiet which incessantly tormented

him. His state was truly pitiable. Long had he anticipated, what now took place, his ruin; but the means, by which it was worked, filled him with not more surprise than indignation. The consummate hypocrisy of Barclay nearly petrified him; for nothing is more mortifying, even to a knave, than deception. This fellow, thought he, was imposing on me, at the very time I fancied him duped; but perhaps the whole is fiction.—Gaining fresh courage by the suggestion, he prepared boldly to investigate the charge of Barclay; who, with a smile of satisfaction, assured him, he would presently remove all doubt.—This may be the language of assumed consequence, thought Seamore; but the hope was a vain one. Witnesses of undisputed testimony were produced, and unequi-

vocally proved Lionel to be the son of Admiral Rivers.

Seamore, though sorely against his will, was compelled to yield to conviction. He is not Edgar Mordaunt! what pangs that knowledge had spared me! Oh! Barclay, abandoned villain, most amply are you revenged. Was it for this, I mutely bore your taunts, heard reproaches that caused indignation I durst not vent?—Days and nights of anxiety have I passed, to enrich one, who was my bitter enemy. Yet could I expect other return? His designs circumvented, disappointment ensued, the effects of which I now feel.

Seamore never once recollected the part he had acted by Barclay. These lovers of dissimulation were fairly deceived by each other; and when no

longer bound by interest, unrelentingly dissolved their vile compact, exposing to the world the foundation of their friendship.

CHAPTER XIII.

COMPARISON itself would fail to convey an adequate idea of Seamore's feelings, on the discovery made by Barclay. At first he discredited it; but proofs were brought so convincing, that placed the whole beyond a doubt. Subterfuge was vain, and all he wished to avoid was publicity.

Alfred was called in. What an *eclaircissement* took place! what a happy reverse! Alfred, whom I shall now call Lionel Rivers, like one raised from the lowest abyss of despair, to

the height of bliss, felt more than language can express. Helen was not his sister!—Joyful idea! thought too big for utterance! No longer a dependent on the bounty of others, he could now return the disinterested love of his amiable cousin, and prove the sincerity of his attachment. To say it equalled his, is the best description that can be given of Helen's rapture; all doubts removed, her heart was his, more enriched for its own value than all the charms that wealth can give.

Seamore, the enfrenzied Seamore, felt a gleam of satisfaction, when convinced that Helen and Alfred were only cousins; but in proportion as his former anxiety became lessened, his detestation of Barclay increased. His uncommon duplicity astonished even the adept himself. What hours of

bitter anguish had the fatal concealment caused; but yet, more distracting, what money had it obtained! and all to no purpose. The whole appeared like a dream; but, alas! Seamore proved it a waking dream.

'Twas hard to quit the lap of affluence, 'twas hard to bid adieu to luxury. Yet, yet, restitution must be made, and the voice of Horace Barclay demanded it. Lionel Rivers, the only injured being, had bid vengeance rest; but the voice of an accomplice pronounced the fatal dissent; he would see justice done.—Oh! Barclay, exclaimed Seamore, with peculiar emphasis, you see justice done!—The once dear friends (so called) looked at each other; the look partook of mingled reproach and fury.

Oh ! Time, thou unraveller of mysteries, what hidden secrets were now brought to light !—All that Seamore could restore, was restored to the much wronged heir of the gallant Admiral Rivers; but it fell far short of his just claim. The united extravagance of Barclay and Seamore had contributed to diminish an almost princely fortune; but Lionel nobly forgave the injury—'twas committed by the father of Helen.

Helen, overwhelmed by the discovery of her father's guilt, yielded herself a prey to the most violent grief.—Unkind, ungenerous girl, said Lionel, in a tone of tender reproach, you feel yourself humiliated, because I am no longer your inferior; because you cannot exalt the poor, despised,

dependent Alfred, to that sphere your noble heart had bid him grace. But know, dear girl, not all the return fortune enables me to make, can ever lessen that generous act, which now I proudly imitate. If you feel oppressed, if you feel the warm blood quick mantling in your cheek, so felt the grateful Alfred. If native pride swells that pure breast, believe me, when I swear with not less dignity glowed mine. Do you despise the sweetly painful throb, by weight of obligation caused? Recollect Alfred was not exempt. But should you deem it too debasing, and refuse acceptance, let candour's voice whisper to Helen—she, who is too proud to receive a favour, is unworthy of conferring one; pride alone prompts, and the heart shares not in the deed.

He ceased; for well he observed the varying countenance of Helen, and read in her altered looks the wished-for compliance which he panted to obtain.

Seamore, full bent on self-interest, employed to his own advantage the time spent by Alfred and Helen in generous struggles. He eluded the vigilance of his wary confederate, and decamped enriched with thousands.—Not all the losses of Barclay affected him so much, as did that which his revenge sustained by the departure of Seamore. To expose him to the whole world, was now his only consolation; poor consolation, indeed! since Seamore had fled, was beyond the reach of scandal, and heard not the degrading epithets by which he was called. While slander amused, Barclay received sufferance; but when that fail-

ed, and novelty had ceased, the warmth of professing friends abated, and finally degenerated into the most provoking coldness. The ruined profligate felt now the dire effects of his libertinism; not that his worthy associates were only then sensible of his vices, but he was indigent, and, consequently, became soon abandoned by all.—He that draws pleasure from one particular source must expect, when that source is drained, his pleasure will likewise prove exhausted;—this was the case with Barclay.

When Helen had recovered the shock, which the conduct and desertion of her father had occasioned, she bestowed her hand on Lionel, and in him found all that is essential to human happiness. Her own felicity experienced a pleasing contrast, by that

which the amiable Granger enjoyed. He had conquered his hopeless flame, and sought peace and tranquillity in the society of Sophia Arlington, with whom he tasted the most consummate bliss. Those virtues, which had adorned humble mediocrity, shone more exalted in the sphere to which fortune elevated her.

Mr. and Mrs. Rivers were frequently honored with a visit from Lord and Lady Arrowsmith; and when they graced the higher circles were favoured with a familiar How d'ye from the Dowager Lady Arrowsmith. Lady Maxwell bestowed a simpering look of recognition, as did the Countess of Glenmore. Walter Hamilton, officious as usual, whenever he met Rivers, attempted to improve him, but the infinite pains he bestowed were unneces-

sary. A confession he ingenuously made in the presence of the lovely Mrs. Hamilton, which obtained from her a compliment the most flattering.

Helen had been supremely blest, but for the solicitude she felt about the fate of Seamore, who had left England without even taking leave, or acquainting her of his destination. Sensibly hurt by this want of affection, she nevertheless could not but feel interested for his welfare, though he had proved unmindful of her's, and never on one occasion fulfilled the duties of a parent. The most chilling severity marked his conduct toward her; and Helen, unblest by the soothing voice of parental love, had little to regret. But her nature was tender and compassionate; she could not forget the author of her being; he claimed her sympathy, for

unacquainted with his peculation, she feared he might be exposed to the difficulties with which poverty is attended. Her sensibility was awakened; she longed to smooth the rugged pillow of distress, to cheer with the smile of filial affection the gloomy scene of dreary adversity; but all her endeavours to discover his retreat proved unsuccessful. Fruitless was the unwearied search of Rivers; Seamore eluded all pursuit, and they could gain no intelligence of the fugitive. Time abated the distress of Helen; and when she contemplated her lovely offspring, she fondly gazed at their amiable father, gratefully acknowledging she had not an ungratified wish.

Seamore, left to his own cogitations, ruminated on the past with no small share of disquiet; from the height of

affluence, to tread the path of sober mediocrity, he felt was impossible. Compelled to resign luxury, at a period when increasing years bring with them additional wants, was a task he had not the fortitude to perform. Pampered, and accustomed to every indulgence, how could he partake of the frugal repast; moderation was a lesson he had yet to learn. He ruminated on the mighty change, till thought became anguish; with the sum he had secreted, he resolved to begin the world anew. Commerce, despised commerce, now engaged his attention; indiscreet resolve! Seamore, at an advanced period of life, from misconduct and a love of pleasure, had reduced himself to the necessity of seeking a subsistence; for though still the possessor of thousands, he foresaw, according to his

expensive way of living, it would soon dwindle into nought. 'Tis true, he might have been contented to sink the capital into a life annuity, and pass his days in peaceful tranquillity. Blest with the comforts, if not the luxuries of life, but ambitious, and fond of subjecting others to the restraint he ill could brook, if success crowned his scheme, he anticipated the speedy possession of wealth. Then he could indulge his love of splendor and show.

That Seamore, at the age of fifty-five, should commence merchant, after rejecting the most advantageous offers that had been made him by his father and others, can only be reconciled to those seeming contradictions which mark the human character, and stamp it with inconsistency.—Prudence seldom attends vice; and that which, if

performed to-day, had produced real benefit, by being deferred till to-morrow, is converted into a source of self-punishment. Every act of impropriety brings with it its just reward; we are frequently made the instrument of our own suffering; and, to torment us, events seem to turn out, either right or wrong, according to the wisdom with which we have acted.

That spirit of avarice, cherished in the young bosom of Seamore, and which the carelessness of youthful levity could not banish, attended him in the maturer hour of manhood, followed him on every occasion; and had it forsaken him when life advanced, the departure would have been unnatural.—Humbled by the downfall of his schemes, he might have contented himself, and enjoyed the remnant of his ill-gotten

pelf; and not by obeying the dictates of his darling passion, courted the smiles of fortune, and, consequently, become unprepared to brave her frowns, which sunk him, full of age and infirmities, to the lowest ebb of indigence.

'Twas hard to quit the lap of affluence, and supply his own wants, when each had been anticipated by obsequious attendants, watchful of his nod.—Now it was, that the false splendor of Seamore became converted into a source of self-punishment: the remembrance of former grandeur only served to increase his regret, and mocked his sufferings.—For you, ye fleeting trifles, exclaimed he, I bartered peace; for you, I combined to wrong an orphan, revelled in his fortune; for what? To purchase days of bliss,

with an age of woe!——Seamore, infatuated with his mercantile scheme, actually engaged in an adventure, which, had it succeeded, would have crowned him with wealth; but it failed, and involved the unhappy adventurer in ruin. Attached to his idol, he could not bear to be parted from it; and, accordingly, sailed in the ship which contained his treasure, the whole of which was lost, and but few escaped with life; among whom, Seamore, a complete beggar. He hardly returned suitable thanks to Providence for his preservation; those prayers, that in another gratitude had dictated, were lost in useless repining. His agony on the confirmation of his loss was inexpressible; not the life of the Captain, a man of family; not the lives of best part of the crew, filled the

bosom of Seamore with one pang; all he felt was for himself. Recollection brought to his mind some consolation; the freight was insured. The thought reanimated him as with new life; but the delay, the cruel tedious delay;—the underwriters might be tardy, and, in the meanwhile, he, Seamore, would suffer from the attacks of poverty.

The coast, on which the ship had unfortunately wrecked, was not uninhabited; and ere this, many, more sympathetic than Seamore, came to administer to the wants of the distressed; and when carefully lodged, and comfortably situated, experienced that glow, which he, nor no sordid soul, can feel. —Seamore, dismayed, but unsubdued, received not the chastening stroke with becoming humility; he acknowledged the punishment with the abject fear of

a slave, who yields submission, not from love, but compulsion. He would have been momentarily good, if the trifling sacrifice had insured his success. But not with the Supreme, as with mortals; they judge from the outward act, while the all-pervading eye of Divinity surveys the secret spring of action. No external deed, by way of bribe, can purchase the reward, only to be bestowed on genuine virtue. With mortals, the fictitious robe may be worn, even with success, by the presuming wearer, but no higher can it impose.—If Seamore murmured at his loss, a loss occasioned by casualty, which the adventurer alike, whether virtuous or vicious, is exposed to; how much more bitter were his complaints, when suffering from villainy, such as himself

had practised; the deceiver became deceived. A Mr. Wedgewood, a self-denominated merchant, was passenger in the same ship with Seamore; alike sufferers, they vented their complaints in the one language taught by distress. As nothing cements friendship sooner than misfortune, the two merchants became very familiar with each other. Seamore, unsettled in his mind, could not determine on what plan to pursue, and craved the advice of his new-found friend, which was bountifully bestowed.—Seamore received from him a pressing invitation to make his house his home, till his affairs were permanently settled. The watchful eye of Seamore never lost sight of self-interest; he, therefore, with apparent readiness, admitted Wedgewood to his confidence.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE amicable treaty concluded, nothing prevented the promised introduction; but time, that slow traveller, whom no expedition-fee can hasten. The two friends, in the interchange of mutual good-will, forgot the hours of expectation, or, at least, sought to divert them. At length the period came, when Wedgewood, with the exultation of an honest heart, (or of one, who wished to be thought possessed of that treasure,) bade Seamore welcome to his house; requesting he would con-

sider it his own, till either inclination or circumstance rendered a removal desirable.

With the language of sincerity, Seamore thanked him. His expressions were warm; they reached the tongue, but affected not the heart.—Wedgewood introduced his wife; but who shall describe the rapture, the bliss, the unexpected delight of Seamore, when in the person of Mrs. Wedgewood, he recognized the well-known features of Ermina Egerton!—A blush suffused the cheeks of the fair introduced; a similar glow tinged those of Seamore, but from a different cause. The astonished husband looked at each for an explanation. Delicacy for awhile chained the tongue of Mrs. Wedgewood; but Seamore, less scrupulous, and fearful of exciting

suspicions inimical to his interest, elucidated the whole affair entirely to the satisfaction of the conjecturing husband; who, perfectly at ease, even professed himself pleased at the strange coincidence of events.

It may be remembered, that Mrs. Wedgewood, when Ermina Egerton, proving unsuccessful in her attacks on the invulnerable heart of Seamore, directed her attention toward another quarter. Wedgewood, at that time agent to a mercantile house of great celebrity, had the address to persuade her the merchandise he had to dispose of on commission was his own. Impressed with this idea, she prudently gave her hand to the man she had condescendingly said, possessed her heart. On discovering the imposition, she wisely resolved to spare useless and

unavailing reproach; for if Wedgewood was guilty, she was not guiltless. And when accused by him of saying she possessed more wealth, than really was the case, she retaliated; for he had declared his fortune equal, when actually worth nothing. With this set-off, all further disputes became settled, and the parties agreed tolerably well.

Elevated by this sudden turn of good fortune, Wedgewood became in reality, what he had represented himself to be, a merchant. Success crowned his endeavours; and his affairs were in a most flourishing state, when first he encountered Seamore.—His wife informed him of all she knew of that gentleman's history; for it may be supposed the communication made by Seamore was not without reserva-

tion. She concluded the narrative with expressions of surprise at the strange resolution he had taken of entering into business at his advanced age; for which her husband could in no otherwise account, than by repeating the story given out by Seamore.

A certain sensation, bordering on pleasure, agitated her bosom, at hearing of his misfortunes; for the insult offered her slighted charms, had never been forgotten; nor could it be supposed she would, when poverty rendered her indignation of more importance. Seamore had once deceived her; it was now her turn, and she proved herself no tardy debtor. The remaining property of Seamore, through her instigation, Wedgewood plundered. A complete beggar, he was indebted to the small particle of

humanity, possessed by the worthy pair, for the common necessaries of life.

After months of extreme suffering, he found means to return to England, and resolved to seek his daughter, from whom he hoped to receive relief. She was at Brighton; and the miserable, disguised Seamore caught a glimpse of her, as she entered Donaldson's. His heart beat, his bosom throbbed, and he could not articulate a word; he even let her leave the library, without making himself known. Alternately agitated by a variety of contending emotions, he determined to make her acquainted with his misfortunes; by the means of a letter, his feelings would be spared. Scarce knowing what he did, he entered Donaldson's, intent upon obtaining her

direction. But what a shock did he sustain!—he espied Lord Preston, and opposite him, Timothy Merton.—Awakened remembrance conveyed anguish unspeakable to his tortured mind; and to hide his distress, he precipitately left the shop, though not before Merton had seen and recognised him. Urged by that glow, with which distress always filled his generous bosom, he followed the reduced Seamore.—A long estranged friend of Merton's, hearing of his misfortunes, had kindly alleviated them, and placed that amiable being in a situation, whereby he supported himself with ease and comfort; having a genteel income, the superfluities of which were employed in relieving the unfortunate.

Seamore, whom he now recognised in that character, claimed his sympa-

thy; he probed not the lacerated bosom by the questions which curiosity dictates. Softened by his exalted conduct, the natural austerity of Seamore vanished, and he made a full disclosure of every afflicting circumstance. The recital pained the susceptible Merton; he was not wont to rejoice at the misery of another. Seamore had treated him ill; but what he remembered in the days of prosperity, he forgot in adversity, and at parting, unasked, bestowed his mite.

God of mercies! exclaimed Seamore, as he stood suspended between acceptance and refusal. But while he was thus deliberating, the generous donor disappeared, leaving the subdued penitent overwhelmed with shame and confusion; he recollected his own conduct, and for the first time blushed.

at it. Not all his sufferings, not all his disappointments, had produced such an effect on him, as did his meeting with Merton. Equally deplorable, he encountered Barclay. Both started, as they mutually contemplated the change each other had undergone, which filled them with every emotion save pity.—Seamore possessed great pride; but not that laudable kind, which prevents its possessor from committing a dishonorable action. He could not support the sight of Barclay; it recalled past events. But what a miserable change! what a sad reverse! what a strange vicissitude! Yet such a termination, as ever attends vice. That Barclay should be eye-witness of his misery, behold his poverty, and exult at it, was more than he could support; it cut the very thread of life, and short-

ened existence. The broken-hearted Seamore died in obscurity!—His death reached the ears of the only beings interested for such a character; Helen let fall the tears of filial sorrow, and Lionel, deeply affected, heaved the sigh of sympathy. Not that the real circumstances of Seamore were known to them; Providence, out of mercy, concealed his deserved sufferings, to spare a pang to the bosom of virtue;'twas for his death alone they mourned.—Seamore and Barclay afforded a striking instance of the instability of human grandeur, and the uncertainty of riches. Possessed of not one good quality, Seamore died, as he had lived, miserable. In speaking of Barclay's errors, a something like extenuation may be offered—the indulgence of his parents was the source of all his vices.

CHAPTER XV.

ADVERSITY is the time for a man's failings to be published; while his virtues, though he possess many, are overlooked. The benevolence of Barclay was extensive; he never gave to public charities, that is, he never gave in a public manner; and many, who partook of his bounty, knew not the generous donor. The silent eloquence of mute distress was seldom lost on him; he spared the debasing supplication, nor caused the blush of ingenuous shame to tinge the cheek of in-

digence.—Barclay softly followed, open'd the closed door, and quickly vanished.—Pluck but the rank weed dissipation, and he had proved virtue's choicest flower.

To stem the torrent of mortal slander, and stop the tongue of reproach, I beg leave to recount the following—what shall I call it ?—story ! Call it by whatever name you please, 'tis at least, an act worthy of imitation.—A young man, of respectable connexions, and whose parents had seen better days, was recommended to the notice of Barclay. The abilities of Smith were but slender ; nevertheless, in consideration of his family, Barclay received him into his office, at a salary much beyond his merit. From this circumstance, the gratitude of Smith knew no bounds, and his efforts to please

were unwearied. In time he gained the unlimited confidence of Barclay, and even was intrusted with his secrets; the young favourite was permitted to reside constantly at his house, and met with the most flattering indulgence. But the misfortune was, Smith, in private, was as much addicted to dissipation as Barclay was in public; of which he soon gave proofs.

One night, or rather morning, Barclay returned from the gaming-table, with his usual ill success. On this occasion, his loss was attended with some very aggravating circumstances; for the man, to whom he became indebted, had made some illiberal remarks, and altogether refused giving him credit. Enraged and insulted, Barclay knew not what to do; Seamore had refused to assist him any further; and he fear-

ed, intended to keep his word. With some small portion of pleasure, he recollected five hundred pounds, which his private desk contained. To that he resorted, with the gratitude of one who thanks a friend, though he cannot wholly extricate him.—But guess his mortification, I had almost said, despair, when he found the lock had been picked, and the object of his diligent search taken thereform. Immediately his suspicions fell on Smith, and to his chamber he hastened.

If dreams of love employed the sleeping senses of Smith, the pale visage of Barclay had well realized the idea of some love-sick damsel reproaching the faithless swain. Be that as it may, wake he did, and with no very pleasing sensations neither, for the sound of robbery assailed his ears.

Whether intimidated by conscience, or his nocturnal accuser, I cannot pretend to determine; but, however, he confessed the theft, and besought mercy.—It was granted. Erring himself, Barclay was lenient to others. The astonished and overpowered culprit fell on his knees, and shed tears of deep and sincere contrition. My parents, ejaculated he,—shall not know of the affair, interrupted Barclay, in a voice equally tremulous.—But my dismissal, continued Smith, will reveal the fatal truth;—and his agony increased.—What, dismiss you, replied Barclay, to expose you to temptation, and cast an odium on your character? No, that were stinted kindness. Keep your own secret; I promise you, the affair shall not be mentioned.—God of mercies! exclaimed the unfortunate

youth, attempting to cast himself at the feet of Barclay; who, overcome with emotion, left the room, and when alone, actually wept.

Poor fellow! said he, I have done worse, but in a different way; shall I expose a susceptible bosom to the barbed arrow of disgrace, cast such from society, and per force make him the companion of vice? 'Tis not for Barclay to perform such an act.—This single confession, this exalted, yet humiliating acknowledgment, had well taught philanthropy to open wide the all-concealing mantle, and hide from vulgar eye the errors of Barclay. To think of sleep was impossible; and Barclay kept his mournful vigils, till gaiety returning, he actually laughed at himself, called thought a bore, and rung for his valet. Surprised at the

early summons, he nevertheless obeyed; and Barclay, who was a stranger to pride, observed, "Fuller, I'm sorry I've disturbed you; but recollect 'tis the public breakfast of Lady Hewit; I wish to take unusual pains; above all, dress me well."

Restored to good-humour, Fuller obeyed his whimsical master, who, some hours after, attended the *dejeune*, all protesting they never saw him in higher spirits; which really was the case, for thought rarely obtruded itself.—His conduct toward Smith produced on him such an effect, that he formally renounced cards, and became an ornament to society.

Barclay, harassed and oppressed by his numerous creditors, hardly dared to venture out; his uncommon spirits, which never totally forsook him, how-

ever, surmounted every difficulty; and attired in the relics of former greatness, he sallied forth. Scarcely had he proceeded an hundred paces, when a voice, which he could not recollect, addressed him by name. Barclay, without turning round, attempted to pass on; but his progress was impeded, and in endeavouring to disengage himself from the assailant, judge his astonishment on beholding Smith!

A crimson glow overspread the cheeks of Barclay; his dress, like his looks, indicated distress; and Smith, delighted, beheld the change. Harsh phrases, which bore an exalted meaning! he could now testify that gratitude, with which the mercy of Barclay had filled his bosom. Suffice it to say, though basking in the smile of fortune's sun, he, with exultation, led

the dejected Barclay to his wife and family, introduced him as the preserver of his life, related by what means, and felt that ingenuous blush, which a noble mind can alone feel when recounting its own errors,—errors, that like the polish, add a brighter lustre to the gem itself.

Barclay, rescued from poverty and misery, lived to reform; and when the hour of parting nature arrived, closed with one soft sigh his chequered life. Attendant seraphs received his freed spirit, oblivion cast a friendly veil o'er all his failings; but Mercy, sweet maid! with gentle hand, engraved on the tablet of memory the act performed by Barclay; and there it lived, for ever lived.

THE END.

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